

The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

Electronic Meeting  
28 June – 8 July 2016

**Electronic SQAC will commence on Tuesday 28 June 2016  
and close at noon on Friday 8 July 2016**

**AGENDA**

**1. Formal Business**

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|-----|--|--------------|
| 1.1 | Minutes of previous meeting held on Thursday 26 May 2016                     | QAC 15/16 7A |
| 1.2 | Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26 May 2016 | QAC 15/16 7B |

**2. For Approval**

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|-----|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2.1 | ELIR Theme Lead Reports               | QAC 15/16 7C |
| 2.2 | College Annual Report Template        | QAC 15/16 7D |
| 2.3 | Internal Review Reports and Responses |              |

Final Reports: QAC 15/16 7E

- TPR of Applied Sport Science and Sport and Recreation Management
- TPR of Celtic & Scottish Studies
- TPR of Veterinary Studies
- PPR of GeoSciences (PGT)
- PPR of Veterinary Studies (PGT)
- Thematic Review of Mental Health Services

Feedback to Schools: QAC 15/16 7F

- TPR of Biological Sciences - Year on response
- TPR of Music - Year on response
- TPR of Archaeology - Year on response
- TPR of Informatics - Year on response
- PPR of Health in Social Science – Year on response
- PPR of Online Distance Learning Programmes, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine – Year on response
- TPR of Oral Health Sciences – Year on response
- PPR of Divinity - 14 week response

**3. Date of Next Meeting**

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|-----|---|
| 3.1 | Thursday 8th September 2016 at 2pm in Raeburn Room, Old College |
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The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26 May 2016 at 3pm  
in the Hodgson Room, Weir Building, the King's Buildings**

Minutes are draft until approved by the next meeting of the Committee

<b>Present:</b>	
Professor Jeremy Bradshaw	Director of Quality Assurance, CMVM, Assistant Principal Researcher Development
Dr Linda Bruce	Head of Quality Assurance Team, Academic Services
Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Erin Jackson	Co-opted Member: Distance Learning & E-learning
Dr Sheila Lodge	CMVM Head of Academic Administration
Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka	EUSA Academic Engagement Co-ordinator
Dr Robert Mason	Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) College of Humanities and Social Science
Dr Gordon McDougall	Dean (Quality Assurance), College of Science and Engineering
Barry Neilson	Director, Student Systems
Professor John Sawkins	External Representative. Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching), Heriot-Watt University
Dr Claire Phillips	School Representative (Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Dr Inger Seiferheld	School Representative (Business School), College of Humanities and Social Science
Dr Jon Turner	Director, Institute for Academic Development
Imogen Wilson	Vice President (Academic Affairs), EUSA
<b>In attendance:</b>	
Brian Connolly	Secretary to Senatus Quality Assurance Committee
Nichola Kett	Head of Enhancement Team, Academic Services
<b>Apologies:</b>	
Ronnie Millar	Director, Student Counselling Service, Representative of Student Services

Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services
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## 1. Welcome and Apologies

The Convener welcomed members and noted apologies.

## 2. Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 20 April 2016 were approved. QAC 15/16 6A

## 3. Matters Arising

3.1 There were no matters arising. QAC 15/16 6B

## 4. Convener's Business

### 4.1 Membership

The Convener noted that several members would come to the end of their term of office in the summer.

**Action: Learning and Teaching Policy Group (LTPG) to consider co-opted membership of Senate committees. Committee Secretary to report decision back to co-opted members of SQAC.**

### 4.2 Postgraduate Research Student Progression Milestones

It was noted that the online annual progression monitoring system would become mandatory for all Schools as of September 2016.

### 4.3 Thematic reviews of Student Support Services

The Convener reported that 2016-17 would be used as a year of reflection in order to review the process, particularly in the context of the review of the quality framework.

## 5. For Discussion

### 5.1 Quality Framework Review

5.1.1 Final proposals for approval QAC 15/16 6C

The Committee received and discussed the final proposals for revisions to the University's Quality Framework. It was noted that the framework review aimed to streamline processes while deriving maximum benefit from quality activity. The proposals had been developed following consultation with all schools and colleges, including individual consultation with each school. The proposals had been finalised following the latest consultation with schools and colleges in April 2016. Key changes included:

- School annual quality report deadline - the deadline had been moved to August following feedback from some schools indicating that June was too early for submission.
- Monitoring courses within annual programme monitoring – stronger emphasis on the programme as the key level for reflection and action due to the fact that students enrol on programmes, and the University's awards are conferred at programme level. Individual courses are discussed within the context of the programme, however reporting will be at the programme or programme cluster level. It is stressed that programmes can be reviewed in clusters as suits the local context – there is no requirement to report on individual programmes.
- School quality model template – an earlier version of the framework proposed introducing a quality model template for schools to describe their quality processes. With a view to streamlining this, it was now proposed that schools should give a brief description of how their annual programme and other monitoring processes work, describing how things happen in the annual cycle leading up to production of the annual quality report. This would also help ensure continuity between school director of quality appointments.
- Student engagement – clarification that student engagement would continue as present but would include developments in response to the ELIR recommendation.
- College role – consultation ongoing with the Deans on the College role, particularly in regard to the draft college annual report template focusing on actions in progress and planned as a result of college oversight of school reporting. Stronger emphasis on the role of peer review.

**Action: TH and NK to liaise with schools to discuss the alignment of the Internal Review and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) reviews.**

**Resolved:** The Committee **approved** the new Quality Framework.

### 5.1.2 School Annual Quality Report Template

QAC 15/16 6D

The Committee received and discussed the revised template for the school annual quality report for implementation in 2016/17. It was noted that the revision formed part of the review of the University's quality framework. The following was noted:

- The template would be used for all credit-bearing taught and research provision. To make this more explicit, the guidance would include the suggestion to break down each section into taught and research themes, and 'Outcomes of accrediting body reviews' would be added to data sources and scope clarified as being all credit-bearing provision.
- Some schools commented on the accuracy of centrally produced data. Getting data reports right is a two-way process. Schools and colleges have to be proactive in identifying issues.

- The first report in August 2017 would cover 2015/16 and 2016/17, plus an update on progress with actions from 2014/15. To make the composite report easier colleges would suggest to schools that they now start to collect issues as they emerge.

**Action: College representatives to encourage schools to keep note of themes from this year to act as an aide memoire for the first composite report due in August 2017.**

**Resolved:** The Committee **approved** the new school annual quality report for implementation in 2016/17.

### 5.1.3 Annual Programme Monitoring

QAC 15/16 6E

The Committee received and discussed the template for annual programme monitoring for implementation in 2016/17. It was noted that the template formed part of the review of the University's quality framework. The following was noted:

- The template would be used for taught and research provision. To make this more explicit, the guidance would suggest that each section could be broken down into taught and research provision. Reporting on research provision should be at programme level (e.g. training, performance) rather than by individual student.
- The Deans agreed that the template should state that it covers all credit-bearing provision, including collaborative provision.

**Resolved:** The Committee **approved** the new the template for annual programme monitoring for implementation in 2016/17.

### 5.2 EvaSys Course Evaluation Roll-Out

QAC 15/16 6 F

The Committee received and discussed the draft Course Evaluation Policy and Questions which were being developed to support the roll-out of the EvaSys course evaluation system.

Members noted that clarification was required in regard to the moderation of the free text boxes (in cases of inappropriate comments), the use and definition of 'appropriate' (in relation to assessment methods), and the potential use of school level question banks (to ensure that data was of specific and practical use to schools).

The Committee noted that the Student Survey Unit, the Institute for Academic Development and Schools were working together on three main strands of activity to support the roll-out: case studies, descriptions and discussion of practice; online resources and guidance notes; and workshops. Consultation meetings had taken place with all Schools and the Unions during April and May 2016 and a workshop on the draft policy and question set had been held at the Senate Symposium at the end of April. Further consultation meetings would take place with college committees and the People Committee and a final version of the policy and question set would be submitted for approval at the September 2016 meeting of Senatus Quality Assurance Committee.

5.3 **Senate Committee Planning**

QAC 15/16 6 G

The Committee received and noted a paper setting out the priorities that the Senate Committees would take to planning next session, and highlighting the key points in the session at which the Committees would be able to input into the planning.

5.4 **PT System Oversight Group**

QAC 15/16 6 K

The Committee received and noted an update from the Personal Tutor (PT) System Oversight Group on activities in relation to the mainstreaming of the PT system within School QA processes.

It was noted that the first meeting of the Group was held on Wednesday 18 May 2016. The Group had received and considered two reports:

1. a report highlighting the key issues in relation to the PT system drawn from the annual College/School QA reports.
2. a report on key statistical data, relating to student feedback on academic support and PT/Tutee average ratios, for each School for the year 2014-15. Data were drawn from the National Student Survey (NSS), the Edinburgh Student Experience Survey (ESES) and the Enhancing Student Support (ESS) project survey of on-campus postgraduate taught (PGT) students.

As part of the annual QA reporting process Schools were asked to report against a baseline KPI of 80% student satisfaction with their PT experience, with the figure drawn from NSS, ESES, and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) results. Where student satisfaction fell below the KPI Schools were asked to report on action initiated. The Group noted that a number of Schools were below the target KPI, of which all but one were between 70-79% (including the University as a whole at 77%). The Group agreed that more current and detailed PT performance data was required. Once this information was available further discussions would take place with Schools failing to meet the baseline KPI to determine how to achieve greater levels of consistency and higher levels of student satisfaction.

In the context of PT performance data currently available, it was noted that the Deans were satisfied that Schools had initiated actions where student satisfaction results fell below the baseline KPI. The Deans noted the following strategic issues from their review of the annual School QA reports:

- **PT/Tutee ratios**  
A balance must be struck between the need to maintain appropriate ratios to ensure 'personal' tutoring while also ensuring that tutees were allocated to the appropriate staff to ensure the quality of the student experience. It was noted that, in general, the statistics did not indicate a correlation between high ratios and poor experience.
- **Online Distance Learning (ODL)**  
A review of the specific needs of ODL students and staff will be held during the 2016-17 academic session.

- IT Tools  
The ongoing development of the online tools supporting the PT system will need to be considered, particularly in regard to their use to schedule and record meetings.

It was noted that the Group would consider, in the context of the annual QA reports, and approve the School Personal Tutoring Statements for 2016-17 at the next meeting, to be held on Wednesday 22 June 2016.

## 6. For Approval

### 6.1 Internal Review Reports and Responses:

#### Final Reports:

- PPR of Biological Sciences - Final report
- TPR of Mathematics - Final report
- TPR of Psychology - Final report

QAC 15/16 6H

The Committee **approved** the Final Reports.

#### Feedback to Schools:

- TPR of Archaeology 2014/15 - year on response
- TPR of Informatics 2014/15 - year on response
- PPR of Health in Social Science 2014/15 – year-on response
- PPR of Online Distance Learning Programmes, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine 2014/15 – year-on response
- TPR of Oral Health Sciences 2014/15 – year-on response

QAC 15/16 6L

**Action: TH and NK to consider the issues raised via the Committee reader comments and to report back to the schools concerned.**

**Action: TH and NK to reflect on Internal Review feedback process to Schools, in the light of the Quality Framework Review, and report back to the next meeting of the Committee.**

## 7. For Information

### 7.1 Annual Report to Senate

QAC 15/16 6I

The Committee received and noted the annual report to Senate.

## 8. Electronic Business

### 8.1 Internal Review Reports and Responses:

QAC 15/16 6J

#### 2014/15:

- TPR Biological Sciences - Year on response.
- TPR of Music - Year on response.
- Periodic Review of Student Disability Service - Year on response

#### 2015/16:

- PPR of Divinity - 14 week response

The Committee noted that, subsequent to the meeting, individual Members would be invited to comment on specific responses. These comments would then be consolidated by the Convener and circulated electronically to the Committee, in order to avoid undue delay to the subsequent dissemination to the relevant subject areas and support service. The comments would then be submitted to the next meeting at which point the Convener may wish to highlight specific points for discussion.

## 8.2 Subject Benchmark Statements

The Committee noted that the following Subject Benchmark Statements had been circulated to the appropriate Schools:

- Draft for Consultation: [Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies](#)

## 9. Date of Next Meetings

### 9.1 Electronic Meeting

It was noted that an additional meeting of the Committee would be conducted via email correspondence in late June/early July 2016. This additional meeting would enable the Committee to receive the second round of ELIR Theme Lead updates (in line with the agreed schedule) and allow for the approval of items (such as internal reports and responses) which would not require substantial discussion.

### 9.2 First meeting of 2016-17 academic session: Thursday 8th September 2016 at 2pm in Raeburn Room, Old College.

The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

**Summary of Actions**  
Meeting of 26 May 2016

Item/Paper Reference	Action	Timeframe/process for action to be implemented
<b>4.1 Committee Membership</b>	Learning and Teaching Policy Group (LTPG) to consider co-opted membership of Senate committees. Committee Secretary to report decision back to co-opted members of SQAC.	Wednesday 8 June 2016
<b>5.1 Quality Framework Review</b>	TH and NK to liaise with schools to discuss the alignment of the Internal Review and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) reviews.	Immediate.
	College representatives to encourage schools to keep note of themes from this year to act as an aide memoire for the first composite report due in August 2017.	Immediate.
<b>6.1 Internal Review Reports and Responses – Feedback to Schools</b>	TH and NK to consider the issues raised via the Committee reader comments and to report back to the schools concerned.	Immediate.
	TH and NK to reflect on Internal Review feedback process to Schools, in the light of the Quality Framework Review, and report back to the next meeting of the Committee.	September meeting of SQAC.

The University of Edinburgh  
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Electronic SQAC  
Tuesday 28 June - Friday 8 July 2016

## **ELIR Theme Lead Reports**

### **Executive Summary**

The paper presents reports from the theme leads responsible for taking forward the areas for development from the University's Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) in Semester 1 2015/16. The reports outline priority actions for year 1, and include high level plans for years 2 and 3. The aim is to ensure that all recommendations are actioned by the end of year 3 and that as far as possible there is evaluation of their impact. Senate Quality Assurance Committee will have oversight of monitoring progress against agreed actions. Theme leads will report every 3 months in year 1: July 2016 (electronic circulation), and the committee meetings of September 2016, December 2016, February 2017. The report of February 2017 will form the basis for the University's year-on report to QAA (Scotland) in March 2017. Thereafter reporting to the committee will be a minimum of 6 monthly in subsequent years: September 2017, February 2018 and so on. Learning and Teaching Policy Group will also receive the reports and will discuss and advise in line with its strategic remit.

### **How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?**

The paper is relevant to the University's Strategic Plan 2012-2016 strategic goal of 'excellence in education' and strategic theme of 'outstanding student experience'.

### **Action requested**

For approval.

### **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

Theme leads will implement and communicate actions within their area. The Senate committees' newsletter will include an item on ELIR actions.

### **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

#### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

The implementation of the plans have resource implications for support services as well as for Colleges and Schools, which LTPG will need to take account of when setting the priorities for the Senate Committees. The 'staff engagement in learning and teaching' theme has implications for workload allocation models and for the reward of excellence in learning and teaching. PREP activities are subject to planning round approval.

#### **2. Risk assessment**

The ELIR has been managed within the University's risk management process.

**3. Equality and Diversity**The paper does not require an Equality Impact Assessment. Equality and Diversity considerations will be taken into account by the theme leads.

**4. Freedom of information**

The paper is open.

**Key words**

ELIR, ELIR theme leads, ELIR reporting, quality assurance.

**Originator of the paper**

Assistant Principal Susan Rhind, Assistant Principal Alan Murray, Assistant Principal Jeremy Bradshaw, Barry Neilson, EUSA & college deans, Senior Vice Principal Charlie Jeffery & Vice Principal Jane Norman.

June 2016

## ELIR Theme Leads Report June 2016

### Theme: Assessment and Feedback

#### Theme lead: Assistant Principal Susan Rhind

**Recommendation 59.** Subject-level staff who met the ELIR team indicated that discussions have been held at school level about approaches to providing feedback, and that there continued to be frustration around the comparatively low scores in a number of schools. The University is encouraged to progress with its plans to engage in further analyses of NSS free text answers at school level, in addition to working with students in the schools concerned to address the matters raised. (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 55, 56, 57, 58, 75)

<b>Recommendation 59 Actions</b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
<p>Aim to be in a position where staff and students have a sound mutual understanding of standards and expectations in assessment and feedback.</p> <p><b>Establish an Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group</b> Met in April and contributed to evolution of the quality guidelines paper. Pilot project in progress between student systems and Informatics to automate free text analysis from NSS. New research fellow appointment (part time from June) will assist in thematic analysis of free text comments more broadly. The impact of these projects should be reflected in increased understanding of the issues at school level and continued small % year on year gains in overall NSS scores and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing monitoring and comparison of NSS (and ESES if it remains) data with previous year</li> <li>• Discussion of data with schools, including external examiners input, and assist in planning interventions where necessary and /or highlight and share best practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor NSS data/ discuss with schools and assist in planning interventions where necessary.</li> </ul>

<p>be reflected in external examiners comments.</p> <p><b>Staff Development</b> Working with IAD and through the new Directors of Teaching Network, staff development will be promoted and visits to schools continued to discuss ideas/ challenges and share best practice. This will include assessment and feedback but also educational staff development in broadest sense recognising that assessment and feedback does not stand in isolation from e.g. good course design and general pedagogic practice.</p>		
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**Recommendation 61.** The University should ensure it is able to implement feedback policy in a clear and consistent manner across the institution so that all students receive timely, relevant and high quality feedback at key points during their programmes. Particular attention should be paid to the provision of formative feedback opportunities that help students progress. There would be benefit in working in partnership with students at school level to understand specific issues and to tailor feedback provision more closely to the needs of students. There would be value in the University reflecting on the positive experiences of assessment and feedback reported by ODL students. (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 55, 56, 57, 58, 75. ODL students: 49) Paragraph 75 repeats the recommendation to reflect on the positive experiences of assessment and feedback reported by ODL students, with the addition of 'with a view to replicating them across the student body'.

<b>Recommendation 61 Actions</b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
<p><b>Feedback Quality</b> Discussion paper on Feedback Quality presented and discussed at AFEG, LTPG and SLTC highlighting the need to consider quality at the 3 levels of programme, course and individual and providing guidelines for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longitudinal analysis of EVASYS/ NSS (ESES if it remains) data</li> <li>• Discuss data with schools and assist in planning interventions where necessary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to analyse EVASYS/ NSS data and work with schools on enhancement</li> </ul>

<p>monitoring and enhancing practice by providing exemplars to promote the development of assessment literacy. 15 day turnaround regulation reviewed and additional guidance on rationale for opt outs developed.</p> <p><b>School Level Analysis</b> LEAF audits, EVASYS, ESES and NSS data continues to be analysed to provide essential school context. Continue to meet with schools who have been through LEAF process to discuss findings and ensure that appropriate actions are taken where problems have been highlighted. Communicate with all heads of school in June the quality monitoring paper and ESES headlines relating to assessment and feedback. Advise action plan will we required in semester 1 of session 16-17.</p> <p><b>ODL student experience</b> To have a more complete understanding of the elements that contribute to the greater satisfaction of ODL students with respect to assessment and feedback, student comments and reflections will be explored further (in progress)</p> <p><b>Online Tools</b> Explore technology solutions to enhance/ facilitate assessment and feedback (agenda item for Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group). This may link to experiences from the ODL group above.</p>		
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Share through DoTN and other means e.g. IAD, Teaching Matters and the elearning@ed community. Include the new IS appointment focussed on assessment in feedback in the assessment and feedback enhancement group.		
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**Recommendation 95.** There would be value in the University reviewing the information provided to students about marking schemes, building on good practice developed within some schools of expanding the descriptors of grade schemes and considering the possible benefit of developing grade descriptors at institutional level. **Recommendation 105.** There would be benefit in the University reviewing the information provided to students on the grade descriptors for the common marking schemes in use and to consider this as part of the wider area for development around implementing feedback policy in a clear and consistent manner across the University. (See paragraphs 51, 75, 95)

<b>Recommendation 95 and 105 Actions</b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
<p>Sharing and discussing ideas to promote Assessment Literacy development in students Through DoTN and locally embedded college/ school events continue to stimulate discussion and share research evidence focussing on assessment literacy and feedback.</p> <p>Curriculum and Student Progression Committee has established a task group which is considering options for various issues regarding mark schemes and course descriptors. These proposals are likely to contribute towards addressing these two recommendations. Once this group has reported the University will consider whether any further action is required to address</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and discuss with schools their progress on engaging students with CMS and course and grade descriptors.</li> </ul>	

<p>these recommendations. The Directors of Teaching Network will provide a useful venue to share and discuss best practice regarding how grade (and course) descriptors are understood by students and how they are applied in the local context.</p>		
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## Theme: Personal Tutor System

### Theme lead: Assistant Principal Alan Murray

#### Recommendation – Greater Consistency in PT support (Paragraphs 44 & 74)

The ELIR team recognised the highly devolved nature of the University and the potential benefits of tailoring the Personal Tutor System to the needs of particular student groups and disciplines. Nonetheless, it was evident that the System was not working effectively for all student groups and there would be considerable benefit in the University revisiting the way in which schools are implementing the System to ensure all students are able to benefit from the arrangements as intended. There would be value in the University providing additional clarification for students around the aims of the System, and signposting alternative avenues of student support, in order to align the expectations of students and staff undertaking the personal tutor role. Paragraph 74 provides more directive text: 'The University should provide additional clarification for students around the aims of the System, and provide information about alternative avenues of student support' (See further background information at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 40, 41, 42, 43, 74).

#### Actions:

By February 17	By February 2018	By February 2019
<p>Document Revision</p> <p>By June 2016 revision of all documents surrounding the PT system – particularly the Academic and Pastoral Support Policy and Schools' "Personal Tutoring Statement" template, aiming to make everything "single-source", to eliminate duplication and contradiction and maximise clarity and readability for staff and for students.</p> <p>The opportunity will be taken to give greater clarity to the expectations of both staff and students in the PT-tutee relationship and to</p>	<p><b><i>Enhanced training for PTs</i></b></p> <p>Enhanced training for PTs with respect to the way in which PT support articulates with central support services and in-School</p>	

<p>clarify the aims of the PT System. This will, necessarily, vary from School to School in detail, but not in terms of the support that is provided.</p> <p><b>New, shorter and clearer documents drafted –group formed to finalise them, meeting 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2016. This package of work will also inform the development of the student and staff thematic webpages (by September 2016).</b></p>		
<p>Subject-specific training Subject-specific training will be offered to all Personal Tutors and Student Support Teams – Students’ Mental Health (currently a growing issue and always a concern for PTs). From September 2016.</p>	<p>Data on Quality of PT Support Complete basic-level Mental Health training for all PTs and begin higher-level training for a subset (eg Senior Tutors, Deans of Students and Senior Support Officers).</p>	<p>Assess the impact of Mental Health Training via a targeted, one-off survey.</p>
<p>Data on Quality of PT Support Use data from the ESES#2015 survey to determine whether inadequate PT support (c20% from surveys) is attributable to a subset of Personal Tutors across the University.</p> <p><b>Done – it is so attributable.</b></p> <p>Advise Heads of School to offer training to, or redeploy, PTs who are known to be failing to provide good support to their students.</p>	<p>Use of Data on Quality of PT Support Gain greater insight into the quality of support provided by <u>individual</u> PTs via a new set of EvaSys surveys.</p> <p>Use these data via Annual Review conversations to empower Heads of School to offer training to, or redeploy, PTs who are known to be failing to provide good support to their students.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor the PT/tutee ratio in Schools to gain an understanding of its influence and disseminate good practice.</p>

	Monitor the PT/tutee ratio in Schools to gain an understanding of its influence and disseminate good practice.	
<p><b>Workload Allocation and PT Support</b> Devise a “tariff” for academic staff workload in PT activity.</p> <p><b>Done – 4 hours/tutee/annum</b></p> <p>Build the 4-hour tariff into all Schools’ Workload Allocation Models.</p>	Monitor the success of the 4-hour tariff in Workload Allocation Models and strive for greater convergence in the way in which it works.	
<p><b>Excellence in PT Support</b> Enhance the prominence of student support in the form of both “front-of-house” teaching and PT activity in reward processes. This will be done via the “<a href="#">Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education</a>” document.</p>	Monitor the impact of student support in the form of both “front-of-house” teaching and PT activity in reward processes.	Monitor the impact of student support in the form of both “front-of-house” teaching and PT activity in reward processes.
	<p><b>PT support for Online Distance Learning (ODL) Students</b> Form a short-term working group to formulate a policy and set of processes to offer an optimised form of “PT Support” to ODL students.</p> <p>Implement policy and processes.</p>	
<p><b>Recruitment and Student Education</b> Devise and implement a process that will build applicants’ aptitude for, and likely</p>	Monitor the effect of processes for assessing applicants’ aptitude for, and likely	Review and optimise processes for assessing applicants’ aptitude for, and likely

commitment to, teaching and student support activity into all academic staff recruitment processes into roles that involve, or may ultimately involve, student education.	commitment to, teaching and student support activity.	commitment to, teaching and student support activity.
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### Recommendation – Peer Assisted Schemes (Paragraphs 45)

It was evident to the team that the University's promotion of peer-assisted schemes represents positive practice (see paragraph 77). The team would encourage the University to continue supporting staff and students in the embedding of peer-assisted learning and to continue working with EUSA to deliver appropriate training for peers. (See further background information in paragraph 45)

#### Actions:

By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
<p><b><i>Draw Together Peer Support across University.</i></b> Organise an “Away Day” for all Peer support schemes to gather and disseminate good practice.</p>	<p><b><i>Communication Regarding Peer Support</i></b> Via the <a href="#">“Teaching Matters” blog</a> and the <a href="#">Peer Support Website</a>.</p>	
	<p><b><i>Gather Student Feedback on Peer Support</i></b> Via a broadly-based “away day” meeting, aiming to share good practice and achieve optimal consistency in approaches to Peer Support across the institution.</p>	

## Theme: Postgraduate research student experience

### Theme lead: Assistant Principal Jeremy Bradshaw

#### Recommendation 65

The majority of students who met the ELIR team had positive experiences with their supervisors, indicating that they felt supported and encouraged to engage with development and educational opportunities, including attendance at events and conferences. However, a small number of students did not feel that this was the case and they were not aware of what to do or where to go if they required further support. Not all of the students considered that the Code was implemented consistently. Heads of school outlined the roles of the co-supervisors in cases where students did not consider that their needs were being met, and acknowledged that further training for some research supervisors could be beneficial. The team encourages the University to review the effectiveness and regularity of research supervisor training. (Further background information at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 62, 63, 64, 66, 79)

<b><u>Recommendation 65 Actions</u></b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
The Postgraduate Research Experience Project had been intended to address these issues by determining and setting unambiguous institutional expectations for supervision and independent (non-supervisor) support, and by recording training and development activities alongside a progress record. The project will now not be funded as an individual item in the planning round. Discussions are progressing between the Convenors of Senate Researcher Experience Committee (REC) and Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) to put together a joint REC-SQAC task group to lead the work.		

### **Recommendation 67**

The University should continue to analyse the needs and experience of postgraduate research students at school, college and institutional level to ensure that they are effectively supported, particularly in the context of the University's plans to increase the research student numbers. **The University should review the effectiveness and regularity of supervisor training and ensure that the University's Code of Practice is communicated and implemented effectively. The University should also made certain that postgraduate research students who teach are properly trained and supported for the role (including in the provision of assessment and feedback) and are made aware of the career development resources available through the IAD.** [Para. 66 has background information to the recommendation on training for postgraduate research students who teach: "The training and development for tutors and demonstrators has developed since the 2011 ELIR with better oversight of tutors through guaranteed contracts and the appointment of a staff member in the IAD who works specifically with this group. Nonetheless, during the current ELIR, undergraduate students expressed a level of dissatisfaction with teaching delivered by postgraduate research students and the research students who taught indicated to the ELIR team that they did not always feel sufficiently trained or prepared to do so."]

<b><u>Recommendation 67 Actions</u></b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
See above.		

### **Recommendation 67**

**The University should continue to analyse the needs and experience of postgraduate research students at school, college and institutional level to ensure that they are effectively supported, particularly in the context of the University's plans to increase the research student numbers.** The University should review the effectiveness and regularity of supervisor training and ensure that the University's Code of Practice is communicated and implemented effectively. The University should also made certain that postgraduate research students who teach are properly trained and supported for the role (including in the provision of assessment and feedback) and are made aware of the career development resources available through the IAD.

<b><u>Recommendation 67 Actions</u></b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
See above.		

**Theme: Staff engagement in learning and teaching (workload allocation models)**

**Theme leads: Senior Vice Principal Charlie Jeffery & Vice Principal Jane Norman**

**Theme leads: Senior Vice Principal Charlie Jeffery and Vice Principal Jane Norman**

**Recommendation 13:** The ELIR team learned about plans the University has to develop existing staff workload allocation models to recognise in a consistent way contribution to priority areas such as personal tutoring, assessment and feedback, and contribution to other enhancement activity. This is likely to promote greater transparency, consistency and understanding of workload allocation among staff, as well as ensuring that academic staff are able to support the University's strategic priorities for learning and teaching. The University is encouraged to progress this work. (Further background information at ELIR Technical Report sections 1.2, 1.3).

<b>Recommendation 13 Actions</b>		
<b>By February 2017</b>	<b>By February 2018</b>	<b>By February 2019</b>
<p>By February 2017 we want to have developed existing staff workload allocation models to recognise in a consistent way contribution to priority areas such as personal tutoring, assessment and feedback, and contribution to other enhancement activity.</p> <p>Committee Schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LTPG 1 Feb: Initial discussion on standardisation of recognition of key teaching-related activities in workload models;</li> <li>- People Committee 16 Feb Initial discussion on standardisation of recognition of key teaching-related activities in workload models;</li> <li>- CMG on 14 June to agree revised principles and core common activities to be included in workload models;</li> <li>- CJCNC 27 June 2016 for approval.</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A

**Recommendation 14.** Overall, the ELIR team formed the view that the University has a reflective and inclusive approach to developing strategy, and that communication and consultation with staff about strategic developments is effective. The University's approach to implementing strategies relating to learning and teaching is effective, with some challenges remaining around ensuring alignment between institutional priorities and operational structures, which the institution is open in recognising. In order to further support implementation of institutional strategies, the University is encouraged to progress its plans to develop existing staff workload allocation models to recognise consistently staff contributions to key aspects of learning and teaching across the University. (Further background information at ELIR technical report sections 1.2, 1.3.)

<b>Recommendation 14 Actions</b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
<p>To have "People" strategies that encourage value, recognise and reward excellence in learning and teaching.</p> <p>In addition to the Workload modelling workstream above, the Enhancing Teaching Performance Working group also has activities on:</p> <p><b>Annual review</b> Broadly on track. Project has been launched to review the quality of Annual Review conversations and tools to evaluate the quality of communications developed. The plan is that the tools will be available by August and that they will be voluntary (rather than mandatory) in the first instance to allow further time for optimisation and feedback.</p> <p><b>Continuing professional development</b> Demand for key elements of framework (eg Edinburgh Teaching Award - EdTA) is good and increasing at a manageable pace. 2 Schools are now running tailored versions with others considering potential for future. Reaction from participants continues to be positive. Draft of external evaluation of EdTA received in late May (positive and with useful insights). Positive progress on cleaning and updating University records of staff with teaching</p>	N/A	N/A

qualification or equivalent as defined by HESA (this work is continuing).

In January, LTC discussed and supported the idea of developing a target for staff engagement with University teaching CPD frameworks (or other teaching qualifications). Paper for PSG on targets and planning for further growth in take up and impact will be prepared by the end of June for consideration in lead up to AY16/17. Preparation of this delayed in part due to uncertainties around HEA (Higher Education Academy). Our current period of HEA accreditation has been extended to summer 2017.

#### **Exemplars of Excellence**

Scope of this work has widened to cover reward and recognition more broadly. Light review of documentation underway and on course to be completed on schedule.

#### **2015-16 Promotions Round**

LTPG received a report on progress at its 10 March 2016 meeting. In addition, proposals for amending the use of the Reader title to allow promotion to Reader on the basis of personal distinction in Education.

#### **Recruitment**

Progress but not on original schedule. Draft position paper to be considered by LTPG on 8 June 2016, and thereafter the plan is to pilot guidance tools from August and to present them to People Committee in October 2016 and CMG in January 2017, with a view to updating the web and communicating the change of approach in spring 2017.

#### **Capability**

On track. Paper to HRPDG for in principle approval August 2016,

<p>Policy to go to CMG for formal approval on 4 October 2016 and CJCNC for approval in October 2016, Support guidance and training and briefing to be developed and rolled out in second half of 2016.</p> <p>All these workstreams are scheduled to have completed their activities by February 2017.</p> <p><b>How will we know when we get there?</b> Student feedback will show improvements in scores at individual staff level and at course/school level.</p>		
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## Theme: Student Data Dashboard

Theme lead: Barry Neilson, Director of Student Systems.

**Recommendation 120.** The ELIR team would encourage the University to progress with this work [Student Systems Roadmap], in particular developing the staff-facing 'Dashboard' project, which will be a key feature of the second phase of the Student Systems Road Map project to take place in the 2016-2021 period. (Further background information in ELIR Technical Report paragraph 119)

<b>Recommendation 120 Actions</b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
<p><b>Dashboards</b> Resources have been identified to support the delivery of the student data dashboards within the University and move these from prototype to a service available to colleagues internally.</p> <p>By the end of 2016 it is expected that the first iteration of the live dashboard service will be in use in the University as a service.</p> <p>By February 2017 we would expect to have the first set of indicators which would provide information on how well the dashboards are being used and a feedback mechanism that will allow for any issues and suggestions to be fed back to the Student Systems team.</p>	<p>The impact of work in 2017 will inform any actions in 2018.</p>	<p>The impact of work in 2017 will inform any actions in 2019.</p>

## Theme: Student representation – college and school level

### Theme leads: EUSA & college deans

**Recommendation 36:** The University recognises that student representation at the college level could be strengthened further, for example the time and volume of committee meetings in one college were identified by students as barriers to engagement, and a flexible model designed to allow a group of representatives to share the load of committee attendance had, to date, achieved mixed success. The devolved structure gives considerable decision-making power to the colleges making it all the more important to have effective student representation at that level. The University is, therefore, encouraged to progress with work to promote and implement more effective representation at the college level. (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paras 36, 37, 39)

<b>Recommendation 36 Actions</b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
<p>a) EUSA has been working with the three Colleges to clarify their committee structures and which College-level committees need student representation. EUSA now has filled the College committee student member roles and work is progressing over the summer to develop a handbook and training session to prepare them for their role.</p> <p>b) Following the EUSA Referendum in March 2016, EUSA is progressing with work introduce improved democratic structures, including new part-time, paid College Reps starting from academic year 2017-18. EUSA and the Colleges have planned to meet over the summer to start to clarify the role of these new College Reps. By February 2017, the Colleges and EUSA will have clear College-specific role descriptions and responsibilities for each of these College Reps, and the roles</p>	<p>The newly elected College Reps will begin their role during the 2017-18 academic year, and by February 2018 the new college-level student representation structures will be implemented and the first six months of these structures will be reviewed.</p>	<p>During the second year, the new college-level student representation structures will continue to be reviewed, taking in feedback from both Student Reps, EUSA, and College staff.</p>

will be up for election in the March 2017 EUSA Elections.		
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**Recommendation 39:** The University is encouraged to continue building on the existing constructive relationship with EUSA to ensure there is more effective student representation at college and school level. The University should review the processes for appointing students to school committees and provide more effective training and preparation for the roles, ensuring that staff in schools understand the student roles and are able to support students to contribute effectively. There would also be benefit in the University considering the best ways of providing feedback to the wider student body about the action that is taken in response to matters raised through school and college level committees. (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 36, 37, 38)

<b>Recommendation 39 Actions</b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
<p>a) EUSA has started to gather data about School-level committees which include Student Reps, how they are chosen, and how they are supported by the School and by EUSA. In particular, EUSA is exploring which School Committees include elected School Convenors as the Student Reps who normally sit on these committees, and how Student Reps sitting on School-level committees would effectively communicate committee business to College Reps. EUSA is developing a spreadsheet of School-level committees including this information to provide clarity for the Schools, Colleges, University at large, and EUSA.</p> <p>b) EUSA is in the process of organising meetings with each School (including their Head of School, Undergrad Director of Teaching, and Postgrad Director of Teaching) which will take place over summer</p>	<p>By February 2018, the improved student representation structures will be start to be reviewed.</p>	<p>School-level and College-level student representation will continue to be reviewed for its effectiveness based on the feedback from various stakeholders.</p>

<p>2016 to review school-level student representation processes and, where necessary, structures within each School.</p> <p>c) Following the March 2016 EUSA Elections, EUSA has filled positions so that each School has an elected School Convenor for 2016-17, and the EUSA Schools Engagement Officer has followed up with each to give personalised support to improve School-level student representation next year.</p> <p>d) See above for proposed improvements to student representation at College level.</p>		
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**Recommendation 50:** In 2014-15, to further support enhancements in ODL provision, the University undertook a thematic review of online/distance taught postgraduate provision in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, with one aim being to explore student representation for ODL students. There would be benefit in the University disseminating the outcomes of the review to all staff involved in ODL provision across the institution. (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 47, 48, 49)

<b>Recommendation 50 Actions</b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
<p>During the 2015-16 academic year, the SQAC task group on Student Representation for Distance Learners and the recommendations from this task group have been disseminated during 2015-16. This has led to revised guidance for SSLCs, published on University website in September 2016, as well as all-student and all-staff emails about the purpose and mechanisms of student representation. The recommendations from this task group will continue to be</p>	<p>The University and EUSA will continue to review support for ODL Student Reps.</p>	<p>The University and EUSA will continue to review support for ODL Student Reps.</p>

<p>communicated and implemented. In addition, EUSA will continue to review how well it supports and engages ODL Student Reps.</p> <p>With regard to internal reviews, the guidance for Schools and for the review team administrator now includes information to consider and mechanisms for including ODL students in the review process and ways in which they can contribute to the review visit. The review visit template has been updated to include specific slots for opportunities for virtual meetings with ODL students and Technology Enhanced Learning (IT tools, e-learning and infrastructure). We will continue to monitor and review the inclusion of ODL students in the Internal Review process.</p>		
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**Recommendation 76:** The University has a positive and constructive relationship with EUSA and it is encouraged to continue working in partnership to ensure there is more effective student representation at college and school level. The University should review the processes for appointing students to school committees and provide more effective training and preparation for the roles, ensuring that staff in schools understand the student roles and are able to support students to contribute effectively. There would also be benefit in the University considering the best ways of providing feedback to the wider student body about the action that is taken in response to matters raised through school and college level committees.

<b>Recommendation 76 Actions</b>		
By February 2017	By February 2018	By February 2019
a) The University and EUSA will continue to work to improve selection and training of Student Reps who sit on College-level and School-level committees, as described above. In addition, EUSA's Schools Engagement Officer will continue to provide more effective training and support for students in the elected	EUSA and the University will review new enhancements to School-level and College-level student representation and gather feedback from a variety of stakeholders.	EUSA and the University will review new enhancements to School-level and College-level student representation and gather feedback from a variety of stakeholders.

<p>School Convenor roles and for the Student Reps who serve on College committees. EUSA and the College Deans are working to improve information and support available to help staff in Schools understand the different Student Rep roles. This will ensure that the students are supported both by EUSA and within the School.</p> <p>b) EUSA continues to update its Schools webpages (available via <a href="https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation/your_schools/">https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation/your_schools/</a>) to improve communication to the wider student body about the work of Class Reps and School Reps within each of the University's Schools. EUSA will continue to support Class Reps and School Reps to share their work via blog posts which are included on those webpages, and EUSA will explore how communication can be improved to the wider student body about the work of College-level committees.</p>		
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The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

Electronic SQAC  
Tuesday 28 June - Friday 8 July 2016

## **College Annual Quality Report Template**

### **Executive Summary**

The paper is the revised template for the college annual quality report for implementation in 2016/17. The revision forms part of the review of the University's quality framework.

### **How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?**

The revised template aligns with the current University priority of simplification, and with the Strategic Plan 2012-2016 strategic goal of 'excellence in education' and strategic theme of 'outstanding student experience'.

### **Action requested**

For approval.

### **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The revised template will be communicated by Academic Services via college representatives, the Senate committees' newsletter and the Academic Services annual policy update in June 2016. A briefing event will be held for schools and colleges.

### **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

#### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

The annual report template has been streamlined and aims to release staff time spent on quality processes while increasing the value derived from the activities.

#### **2. Risk assessment**

The proposals aim to align with the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code and the Scottish Funding Council's current guidance on quality, reflecting the University's low appetite for risk in the area of compliance.

#### **3. Equality and Diversity**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the revised quality framework proposals and no impacts have been identified.

#### **4. Freedom of information**

The paper is open.

### **Key words**

Quality framework, quality framework review, college annual quality report.

### **Originator of the paper**

Assistant Principal Tina Harrison & Nichola Kett  
June 2016

## College Annual Report

College of .....

Academic Year.....

The report should cover all credit-bearing provision, including collaborative and postgraduate research programmes. Colleges are encouraged to use **bullet point** format. A limit of 300 words per section is suggested. Reports should be sent to Academic Services by XXX January annually.

Report of February 2017 to include update on progress with addressing key themes from school annual reports on 2014/15 activity.

### 1. Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

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### 2. Overview of performance data across the college

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### 3. Themes for SQAC forward planning

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### 4. College action plan

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H/02/28/02

The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

Electronic SQAC  
Tuesday 28 June - Friday 8 July 2016

**Internal Review  
Final Reports**

**Executive Summary**

Internal Review Final Reports:

- TPR of Applied Sport Science and Sport and Recreation Management
- TPR of Celtic & Scottish Studies
- TPR of Veterinary Studies
- PPR of GeoSciences (PGT)
- PPR of Veterinary Studies (PGT)
- Thematic Review of Mental Health Services

**How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?**

The paper is relevant to the University's Strategic Goal of 'excellence in education' and the Strategic Theme of 'Outstanding student experience'.

**Action requested**

For Approval.

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

Following approval by the Committee, the final reports will be published on the Academic Services website.

**Resource / Risk / Compliance**

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**  
No.
2. **Risk assessment**  
No.
3. **Equality and Diversity**  
Yes.
4. **Freedom of information**  
Yes.

**Key words**

TPR, PPR, Internal review

**Originator of the paper**

Gillian Mackintosh, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services

**Teaching Programme Review 2015/16  
Applied Sport Science and Sport and Recreation Management  
Report**

**A. Introduction**

1. The Teaching Programme Review (TPR) of Applied Sport Science and Sport and Recreation Management at the University of Edinburgh is part of the University's Quality Assurance procedures, and is complemented by the Senatus and College Quality Assurance Committees' monitoring and reporting, and by the External Examiner system.

2. Range of provision considered by the review:

- **B.Sc. (Honours) Applied Sport Science (ApSS)**
- **B.Sc. (Honours) Sport and Recreation Management (SRM)**
- **B.Med.Sci (Honours) Sport Science Medicine (SSM)**

The TPR consisted of

- [The University's standard remit for internal review](#)
- The subject specific remit for the review, consisting of the following items:

**1. Programme structure, content, assessment and feedback, marking and progression.**

These separate remit items have been conflated and will be taken together under the above heading:

- **Programme structure, content and progression.**  
The current programmes were initially developed in 1999 and although they have evolved to keep abreast of developments in teaching and research, there may be an opportunity to consider some more radical restructuring. Similarly, the demands of the associated professions have changed, and while the programmes have been altered to meet these, it may be time to reconsider these in more detail.
- **Full range of marks and classifications - equity between and within programmes.**  
The percentage of 1st class degrees is still low in the programmes under review, although there has been improvement (particularly in Applied Sport Science) since the 2009-10 TPR. This is linked to the extended common marking scheme and how it is used within courses and programmes.
- **Variety and Innovation of assessment**  
There is a large range of assessment in the programmes under review, but there may be opportunities for further developments (for example, on-line assessments).
- **Feedback and Feedforward and student agency**  
Similar to other areas in the University, feedback is one of the lower scores in the annual NSS for the programmes under review. Therefore the School would like to review good practice and developments in this area. It would

also like information of how students actually use the feedback to inform their learning.

## **2. Employability, placement and vocational opportunities and Careers advice**

- Students repeatedly report that they value and desire more work-related and vocational content and experiences. Sport and Recreation management has a well-established placement and Applied Sport Science has two work-based optional courses, but other avenues (e.g. internships) could be considered to strengthen this facet of the programmes.
  - The availability and relevance of careers advice was noted here (Student remit item).
- The analytical report prepared by the Sport Subject Area and additional material provided in advance of the review (*additional material listed in Appendix 1*).
  - The visit by the review team to the Sport Subject Area, including consideration of further material (*listed in Appendix 1*).
  - The TPR report produced by the review team.
  - Following the review, action by the subject area and others to whom recommendations were remitted.
  - Membership of review team:

Convener: Dr Ewen Macpherson, School of Engineering

External team members: Dr Adrian Burden, Manchester Metropolitan University & Professor Martin Polley, De Montfort University

Internal member: Dr Carol Richardson, Edinburgh College of Art

Student member: Mr Martin Samson, School of PPLS

Administrator: Mr Brian Connolly, Academic Services

3. The Sport Subject Area is located in the Institute of Sport, Physical Education and Health Sciences (ISPEHS), one of the three institutes of Moray House School of Education (MHSE) in the College of Humanities and Social Science (CHSS).

4. The Sports Subject Area is located in St Leonard's Land, part of the Holyrood Road campus.

5. The previous TPR took place in 2009.

6. The Subject Area's Analytical Report was produced by Dr Simon Coleman (Head of Subject Area), Dr John Kelly (Programme Director, BSc (Hons) Sport and Recreation Management), Dr Dave Saunders (Programme Director, BMedSci (Hons) Sport Science Medicine), Dr Martine Verheul (Programme Director, BSc (Hons) Applied Sport Science), Ms Sharon Clough (previous Programme Director, BSc (Hons) Sport and Recreation Management).

## B. Main report

### 1 Strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching

- 1.1 The review team met with the Head of School, Head of Subject Area, a range of academic and support staff, students from Y1-4 and intercalated students. There was clear evidence of a good, collegial environment, and of a high quality of teaching which was reflected in high levels of student satisfaction.
- 1.2 The period since the last TPR of these programmes has been one of major change in Moray House School of Education. In 2012-2013, the School initiated a review of all programmes with the aim of strategically planning future teaching provision. The financial viability of all programmes was considered using a detailed hours-based costing model to determine their profitability in relation to fee income against teaching and administration expenditure. All three programmes covered by the review (ApSS and SSM were considered together) showed a positive balance of income against expenditure. Furthermore, the intake for the Subject Area's programmes is determined at College level within the University resulting in a heterogeneous intake, with a significant proportion of students from the rest of the United Kingdom (RUK) and a capacity available for full fee-paying overseas students. This contrasts with the wider School's large Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes which are costly to deliver and constrained by a dependence on stable guaranteed numbers determined by the Scottish Government. Therefore, by the School's own review criteria, the Subject Area's programmes are being taught efficiently, and contribute positively to School finances with a capacity for further growth.
- 1.3 The Subject Area has recently undergone a significant increase in student numbers. In the period 2010-2015 the total number of students on ApSS has risen from 153 to 179 (increase of 17%), and on SRM from 77 to 124 (61% increase). However, this increase in student numbers has not been accompanied by a proportionate increase in core academic and administrative staff resources. Therefore, staff-student ratios have risen well above the School and College mean, which in turn has implications for staff workloads and the student experience. The School is aware of this issue, but at the moment School finances mean that the College does not favour appointment of new staff. School strategic developments and Subject Area curriculum developments may enable reallocation of resources to alleviate the issue in the medium or long term. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area, in consultation with the School and College, grow student numbers (particularly international and intercalated STEM students) in order to grow resources. Furthermore, it is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider encouraging more of its UG students to move on to its PGT programmes.
- 1.4 With a mind to growing student numbers and staff resources, the review team was in agreement that more could be done to market the Subject Area both within and outwith the University. In order to attract more students, the Subject Area website should be enhanced with videos highlighting the excellent facilities, elite sporting successes, student volunteering opportunities, and alumni events (etc.) to prospective students. In order to justify increased resource allocation, the Subject Area should also seek to help Schools and Colleges across the institution understand the significant contribution its students and staff make to maintaining and raising the profile of the University in the outside world. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider ways to improve the marketing of its provision both within the University and across the sector.
- 1.5 The School Planning and Resources Committee recently agreed that there should be a name change of the postgraduate organization to the Moray House Graduate School of Education and Sport, and a recent school-wide consultation on the title of the School becoming Moray House School of Education and Sport has found support in the School for the name change. This rebrand proposal has been sent to the Head of

College for consideration. In the light of this rebrand, it is **recommended** that the Subject Area also consider retitling its programmes (e.g. to include terms such as exercise, health and physical activity and possibly remove “Recreation” from the SRM programme title) to reflect current programme aims and content which may have evolved since it was conceived.

## **2 Enhancing learning and teaching and the student experience**

### **2.1 Supporting students in their learning**

- 2.1.1** Ongoing support for students is provided through the Personal Tutor (PT) system. Every student has a PT (a member of the teaching staff in their area) providing them with a first-point-of-contact for academic guidance and support during their time at the University. The Subject Area strives to allocate students to PTs who teach on their programmes of study and PTs usually remain with the same group of tutees throughout the four years of the degree programme. PT meetings are an important opportunity to take an overview of students’ feedback to identify common themes and issues. The PT-Tutee ratio in the Subject Area is slightly higher than the School average but well in line with the University as a whole. Each School also has a Senior Tutor (with a remit to oversee the operation of the PT system across the School) and a Student Support Team (SST) to provide PTs with administrative support and help students with information and guidance on routine queries. The School is **commended** on the organisation of the Personal Tutor system with Senior Tutors, Personal Tutors, and the Student Support Team working very effectively together.
- 2.1.2** Intercalated students entering from year two of MBChB into the Sports Science Medicine programme have meetings in Freshers’ week with the Programme Director (who is also their Personal Tutor) to induct them into the learning and teaching strategies of the programme. These students often find that the studying methods for SSM are very different to that in the first two years of their MBChB and so it is necessary for the Programme Director to provide information and support on the independent learning and research-led teaching that are major features of the courses that they take in SSM. The review team suggests that, as part of the induction process, it would be useful for intercalated students to meet previous intercalated students in order to learn from their experiences and facilitate transition.
- 2.1.3** ApSS has trialled a system which notifies students at the end of Y3 what average grade they would need in Y4 to achieve particular classifications. This has been successful in focussing students’ attention on the need to perform at a consistently high level through the honours years.
- 2.1.4** A small number of students within the Subject Area choose to study abroad in Y3. Students are encouraged to contact the International Office to find appropriate programmes at partner institutions. They then meet with their PT and/or Programme Director to discuss the suitability of the chosen programmes and assist with course selection. On return to Edinburgh students meet with their PTs to discuss their experiences whilst studying abroad and how these will inform and enhance their fourth year study and future employment opportunities. Returning study abroad students highly value their experiences, both in terms of academic achievements and in widening their horizons.
- 2.1.5** The Subject Area has a range of specialist, state of the art facilities for learning, teaching and research: one biomechanics laboratory, two physiology laboratories, an environmental chamber, one motor control laboratory, one psychology laboratory with consulting rooms. In addition, to complement the excellent sports facilities available through the University Centre for Sport and Exercise, the Subject Area also has a new swimming pool (with six-camera underwater camera system), a games hall, two

gymnasia, a performance strength and conditioning gym and a dance studio. The Subject Area is **commended** on the excellent dedicated facilities and the links with the University's sports facilities.

- 2.1.6** The Subject Area maintains an Applied Sport Science Facebook page, containing items of interest such as media items on sport science, job advertisements, training opportunities and information from alumni. Students highly value this resource which allows them to keep in contact with colleagues, staff and previous students. However, this resource does require an investment in time and skills from the moderator. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area take a more strategic approach to social media, utilizing full range of platforms to improve communication with students, the wider University and the wider community.
- 2.1.7** The School has a dedicated Careers Officer who delivers sessions in semester one to second, third and fourth year students on careers in sport. Fortnightly in-house appointments are also offered in St Leonard's Land which students can book through the Careers Service's "MyCareerHub". The School is **commended** on the readily available careers service tailored to the needs of the subject areas; with engaged and enthusiastic staff.
- 2.1.8** During the review some students expressed a desire for more peer interaction, particularly during induction and Y1. Students highlighted the lack of subject area events, especially during the first semester, and mentioned that social life felt fragmented until Y2. Despite relatively small cohort sizes, there seemed to be little interaction between year groups and programmes. It was noted that the previous review had recommended that the subject area should explore ways to create social space within St Leonards Land, and also encourage the operation of student societies and subject area sport teams. The review team noted that the Subject Area had had problems identifying space suitable for social interaction due to the complex nature of the building and School policy of avoiding separate social areas in each building in preference to central School social space in Paterson's Land. However, the review team encourages the Subject Area to continue to explore ways to encourage the operation of student societies and subject area sport teams to help increase peer interaction and sense of community. Societies could also play a role in organising and spreading awareness about relevant academic events, such as guest speakers, people from industry, researchers and alumni, which would heighten the profile of the subject area within the university.

## **2.2 Student engagement**

- 2.2.1** The Subject Area has effective mechanisms in place to monitor feedback from students and to follow up issues raised with individual members of staff. The formal feedback mechanism for students in the Subject Area, in line with the rest of the University, is focused on student representation on the Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC). The SSLC meets once a semester and includes a broad representation of students, academics and support staff. Minutes are presented in an easy to read "You said, we did" format for later distribution to all students and staff. Students value the SSLC as a feedback channel and the meetings have resulted in some important changes such as the decision to use APA style referencing throughout ApSS or dissertation target sessions in SRM. They also allow staff to explain some of the examples where the programme team does not appear to be reacting to student comments, offering clarity and rationale wherever appropriate. The Subject Area is **commended** on the format of SSLC meetings, and in particular the use "You said, we did" feedback.
- 2.2.2** You Said, We Did, SSLC Format - an effective format for Staff-Student Liaison Committee meetings, which an accessible overview of student points raised as well as staff response to these issues. This also provides a framework for meetings that is

Formats, such as a list of student points raised used in other subject areas, do not always cover staff response, which plays an important part in student satisfaction.

- 2.2.3** Across the University there are a number of formal mechanisms employed for attaining feedback from students. At the end of each year in Y1–Y3 students take part in the Edinburgh Student Experience Survey (ESES) and final year students take part in the National Student Survey (NSS). In and around these formal milestone surveys, students are frequently asked to complete ad hoc surveys soliciting their opinions on numerous initiatives across the institution. This has resulted in a degree of survey fatigue within the student body which has in turn led to poor response rates.
- 2.2.4** In response to poor NSS response rates and results, the Subject Area instigated a range of proactive remedial initiatives. The survey results were discussed with student representatives to understanding the reasons underlying the responses to the NSS (for example, some questions were reported to be unclear) and changes were made to improve the timing of assessments and quality and speed of feedback. The Subject Area was also highly proactive in encouraging greater completion rates and thereby ensuring a larger and more representative response cohort. In turn, there has been a general improvement in results, with the latest overall satisfaction ratings standing at 92% for ApSS and 95% for SRM – well above the School average (82%), the University average (84%), and the UK subject average score (87.6%). The Subject Area is determined to build on this apparent causal connection, between high response rates and high scores, by setting a goal for the two programmes to consistently be in the top quartile of the University and the UK subject area results (in 2015 the NSS the upper quartile for overall satisfaction rating was 92%).
- 2.2.5** The Subject Area utilizes the School course evaluation system embedded in the Learn Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) as the main formal mechanism for attaining feedback from its students. Completion rates improved when a hurdle was added, requiring completion of the evaluation before revision notes were made available. The Subject Area is **commended** on the use of Learn for individual and cohort feedback, and in particular the use of forced responses to increase course evaluation completion rates.
- 2.2.6** In an effort to increase completion rates further, the School trialled the University of Edinburgh Evaluation System (EvaSys) during the 2013-14 academic session. However, this resulted in a decline in completion rates, in line with a general level of student survey fatigue mentioned above. The School has since returned to its own evaluation system, resulting in improved response rates, however the impending compulsory roll-out of EvaSys across the University for 2016-2017 may threaten this improvement. The review team suggests that the Subject Area initiate discussions with the University Student Surveys team in an effort to improve the quality of questions and data gathered via EvaSys.
- 2.3 Approach to promoting an accessible and inclusive learning environment for all students**
- 2.3.1** The Subject Area has a strong commitment to accessibility, equality and diversity for all students and staff. The Subject Area holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award and the Institute Sports Women in Academic Team (SWAT) network examines issues of particularly relevance to women working in the sport academic subject area. Several staff were members of the School's internationalization working group part of whose remit was to look not only at internationalizing the curriculum but also considered challenges facing students from non-UK backgrounds. Equity and social inclusion issues are also embedded in the curriculum. For example, a range of topics from racism and sectarianism to issues of gender, ethnicity, class, disability and sexual orientation are all dealt with in the core courses of SRM and where appropriate in ApSS and SSM.

## 2.4 Learning and Teaching

- 2.4.1** The Subject Area is currently considering the restructuring of undergraduate provision in relation to proposals for a common Y1. Given that there is some common content in the early years of the three four-year undergraduate programmes, it is logical that a structure that encompasses Sport Science, Sport Management and Physical Education topics be investigated. The advantages of a common programme (in Y1 or Y1 and Y2) are that it could improve the student experience by the mixing and cross-fertilization of the different subject areas, it might increase efficiency of teaching in some areas, there could be easier transfer between programmes in the Subject Area and it would retain a higher proportion of student FTE fees within the School. However, there are a number of disadvantages. ApSS requires students to have a scientific background, which is not required for the other programmes taught in the Institute. Thus students on the SRM and Physical Education programmes may struggle with the ApSS components in a joint 1<sup>st</sup> year programme. Also, it might be difficult to retain enough credits of the professional elements required for ITE Physical Education, there may be even more teaching required in some discipline areas, and staffing and physical resources may constrain laboratory and seminar delivery. The Review Team recognises the advantages and disadvantages of a common Y1 and encourages the Subject Area to explore the options.
- 2.4.2** The Subject Area has an aspiration to increase the accessibility of Sports courses to outside students. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider opening more Y1 courses up to students from across the University.
- 2.4.3** The Subject Area has developed its programmes considerably since the last TPR, and evaluation from students, External Examiners, PSRBs and NSS suggest that generally they are working well. However, educational and work contexts are continually changing, and programmes must reflect this. Subject Area level teaching leadership roles are key to the continuing success of these teaching initiatives. Such roles can be used to ensure that the degrees are relevant, up-to-date and sector-leading rather than reactionary and reactive. Furthermore, to underpin and support a culture of teaching innovation requires a consistent and coordinated approach to staff development. In particular, a focused approach to the staff Performance and Development Review (PDR) process helps to ensure the necessary level of staff training required to drive teaching innovation. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider a new strategic post with remit to lead and enhance the provision of teaching in the Institute.
- 2.4.4** The Subject Area utilizes a range of digital media to enhance the student experience. Staff are encouraged to record lectures as 'podcasts' for student use. ApSS employs a 'flipped classroom' approach in Y1 where lectures are video recorded using the School's new 'Panopto' software and are then available on-line, thus freeing up time for activities such as seminars and workshops during the traditional lecture slots. This gives students better control over the timing and pace of their learning. This was commended as good practice by the External Examiner and in the 2015 MHSE QAE report. Students value this digital resource, especially for examination revision, and the Subject Area has shared its expertise with other Schools (for example Biomedical Sciences Board of Studies).
- 2.4.5** ApSS has also trialled 'Peerwise' software which enables to students write, share and answer their own multiple choice questions. This year, in the ten weeks of semester one, 171 questions were written, with 2830 answer attempts. SRM set up moderated Facebook thematic discussions and debates on critical issues in sport (such as alleged legacies of the Olympic Games) across all year groups. The response to these was very good, and students reported that they were valuable addition to standard learning methods.

- 2.4.6** The Subject Area is **commended** for its use of digital media, particularly the Podcast lectures, to compliment and support teaching. However, these are not yet available in all courses in the Subject Area and it is suggested that all staff are encouraged to include their use into their courses.
- 2.4.7** The SRM Placement course is highly successful and has been praised by students, External Examiners and placement agencies. The course is a full-time 6 week work-based project agreed with a placement agency and is an important selling point of the degree to applicants. Students are permitted to seek a placement anywhere in the UK, although the majority stay in Edinburgh and Scotland (reasonable travel, but no additional accommodation costs, are covered by the programme). Their placement plan is assessed at the end of the four week Sport and Recreation Research Methods 2 course preceding the placement and pre-placement planning workshops are held to engage students at an early stage in the academic year. Planning workshops are attached to the Sport Operations Management 2 course and include writing CVs, interviewing and role play, thus fitting with the Human Resource management content of the course. Students present their research project findings to a panel of internal assessors at the University, as well as a non-assessed presentation to the agency.
- 2.4.8** Students value the industry experience they gain as a way of enhancing their employability, applying theory in practice, and engaging in an action research project. External Examiners have praised the team effort and the way that the course is organised, with very clear processes and deadlines at each stage. Feedback from agencies is very positive as they understand the mutual benefits and are willing to continue to contribute to the SRM programme, despite the pressures on their time and resources such as the increasing numbers of unpaid internships. The Subject Area is **commended** on the placement course which is a highly valued element of the programmes.
- 2.4.9** During the review some students expressed a desire to take up placement opportunities outside of the UK, particularly non-UK students wishing to return to their home country. It was noted that the previous review recommended that SRM explore the potential for students to be provided with more opportunities and encouragement to go on placement further afield, both within the UK and elsewhere in Europe. It was further noted that due to reductions in SRM staffing since 2010 this had not been progressed. Furthermore, the change to the timing of the placement option (moved from Y3 to Y2 partly to allow overseas students to enter Y3) may make it more difficult to allow students to travel to other parts of the UK or other countries. However, the review team encourages the Subject Area to continue to explore the potential for more placement opportunities both within the UK and elsewhere in Europe. It was also noted that increasing the opportunities for non-UK placements, may also reduce pressure on local agencies providing unpaid internships; something which will be of importance as student numbers continue to increase.
- 2.4.10** Placement is resource intensive, although a number of actions have been taken to make the best use of staff. Supervision involves all five members of the teaching team, including the Course Organiser. Challenges continue as the student numbers have increased and therefore more placement opportunities are required with additional staff resources needing to be committed. Not all students receive a personal visit but all have pre-placement and mid-placement tutorials. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area/School consider the creation of a dedicated role with responsibility for co-ordinating placements.

## **2.5 Assessment and Feedback**

- 2.5.1** The Subject Area has a heterogeneous mix of assessment types which range from 'traditional' unseen examinations and essay assignments to novel tasks such as 'infographics', semiotic media analyses, web pages or case study exams. Group work

assessment is used to develop interpersonal and team working skills. Individual assessment is employed to promote independence, personal project and time management skills. All of these skills reflect the various graduate attributes necessary for employment after graduation.

- 2.5.2** Degree classification statistics show a differing pattern between the three programmes. The percentages of students achieving first class awards for ApSS has been significantly increasing: 14% and 17% for 2014 and 2015 respectively. This value is now well above the University of Edinburgh average and in line with the 2012-2013 HESA value of 15.7% for Biological Sciences and the general Russell Group average of 17%. The percentages of students achieving first class awards for SRM has dropped back: 6% and 4% in 2014 and 2015. The reasons for this seem to stem from the fact that some staff in the social science courses are reluctant to award marks above 75% - a fact noted by the External Examiner in his 2013-14 and 2014-15 reports. Staff also seem unsure of how the University's Extended Common Marking Scheme (ECMS) translates in practice to disciplinary descriptors and therefore marking criteria. There is currently a College level working group looking at the ECMS and its effect on degree classifications, and it will provide recommendations later in 2016. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area foster change in marking culture by enhancing subject area descriptors and encouraging fuller use of the ECMS, particularly the use of +80% marks.
- 2.5.3** University policy requires a feedback turnaround time of 15 working days for formative assessment, or in time to be of use in subsequent assessments on the course, whichever is sooner. All students should be given at least one formative feedback or feed forward event in every course they undertake, in the same semester as the course. The Subject Area has effective mechanisms in place for feedback to students centring on the Learn VLE. Feedback is provided to students on individually assessed coursework, as well as cohort feedback statements.
- 2.5.4** The Subject Area requires all coursework assessments to be submitted online through TurnItIn. 'Dropboxes' which link to TurnItIn are placed in the Learn VLE course assessment folders, and students can submit draft copies (to check for plagiarism) up until the assessment due date. Feedback, usually typewritten, addresses each part of the assignment specifications. Some staff also use Learn to provide detailed annotations on students' submissions using a library of comments, but the general rule is that if students wish detailed annotated comments on their work, they may submit a paper hardcopy in addition to the compulsory electronic submission. The majority of courses met the 15 day turnaround deadline. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area should ensure prompt feedback; where the 15 days cannot be met, clear explanations and revised dates must be communicated to students, and these revised dates kept.
- 2.5.5** Cohort feedback is also provided for assignments and examinations giving information on common successes or failings. These documents can then be used as 'Feedforward' for following years so that students can see previous cohorts' responses to assessment. These are available on Learn and students report these are a very valuable resource and has been commended by External Examiners. Furthermore, the Subject Area suggests that there may be a correlation between this feedback and the rise in NSS Feedback scores from 64% in 2013 to 78% in 2015. It might also have contributed to the increase of First Class awards in ApSS from 4% in the 2010 TPR to 17% in 2015.
- 2.5.6** ApSS students are encouraged to engage with their previous feedback by having a section in all assignments entitled "Action on Prior Feedback". In this (ungraded) section, students write what previous feedback comments have suggested and how they have attempted to address this in the current work. If students do include this optional section, staff are duty-bound to comment upon whether students have

addressed the previous issues. Students report that this is a good idea and helps them review their feedback. The Subject Area is **commended** on the use of use of cohort feedback and feedforward from assessments, and in particular 'Action on Prior Feedback'.

## **2.6 Supporting and developing staff**

**2.6.1** The Subject Area has a number of key mechanisms that are in place to support new staff to the programmes, and also early career staff. New staff receive a welcome pack introducing important processes and pertinent HR policies. A buddy system has been implemented whereby new staff are allocated an experienced member of staff who provides on-going support for the first year of the staff member's post. Early career staff have weighted time in their work load model to account for the additional time required to develop new teaching materials. There is also a Workload Model multiplier (approximately 3x) for new content delivery for two years for all staff. All staff undertake an annual review with their choice of reviewer and since 2013 all academic staff in the Subject Area have had an annual review in every year, thus meeting School and College targets. A number of staff on the programmes work flexible hours, and the processes in place to support carers have been made more explicit via sessions on work-life balance. The School and Subject Area also offer a suite of professional development opportunities such as: workshops on early-career issues, work-life balance, catering for accessibility, PhD supervision, SCQF framework and digital education.

**2.6.2** The School has recently reviewed the support offered to PG students in the role of tutor or demonstrator. PhD students now follow a 'road map' which explains the process and training provided, and the support they can expect from the Course Organiser. To be eligible, students also need to have attended two Institute for Academic Development (IAD) workshops entitled "Effective Tutoring" and "Assessment and Feedback". They are also encouraged to attend further IAD courses as well as workshops offered by the Graduate School of Education and Sport.

**2.6.3** The Subject Area makes additional teaching resource available by employing external tutors with Guaranteed Hours Contracts (GHC) or through the ad-hoc payment system. The former is used for staff who have regular teaching delivery and the latter utilised for guest lectures and occasional support. These staff are supported by Course Organisers and Programme Directors who mentor them in their teaching, assessment and administrative duties. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider more ways to support Tutors, both PhD and external, and more ways of including them in decision making processes.

**2.6.4** The Subject Area encourages administrative and technical support staff to utilize University training events and courses. The review team met with a selection of support staff who declared themselves very satisfied in general with the support and development opportunities available to them. The Subject Area is **commended** on its accessible and valued team of administrative and technical Support Staff.

## **3 Academic Standards**

**3.1** The Subject Area has effective mechanisms for setting, maintaining and reviewing academic standards.

**3.2** Programmes are designed in line with the SCQF and QAA subject benchmarks and all course and programme approval processes are aligned with standard University procedures. During 2014-15, in response to the University-wide Programme and Course Information Management (PCIM) project, all learning outcomes were rewritten

with particularly consideration given to ensuring vertical progression throughout each programme.

- 3.3** External Examiner reports are submitted electronically to the University External Examiner portal. They are subsequently sent to Programme Directors for comments and responses and then on to programme teams. The School Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) produces an annual review based on all External Examiner reports which is made available to all staff in the School intranet.
- 3.4** The University recently introduced a Performance Sport Policy which establishing the parameters for alternative equivalent modes of assessment for students absent from examinations due to national level sporting representation. Both the ApSS and SRM programmes have a high number of high level sports performers and this policy is increasingly being used to allow students to balance their academic and sporting commitments. The policy is implemented via discussions between the student and their Personal Tutor, Course Organiser and Programme Director with assistance from the School Senior Tutor.
- 3.5** The ApSS programme is endorsed by the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences, the professional body for sport science in the UK. This is the only such endorsed programme in Scotland and the university is one of only 36 institutions in the UK with an endorsed course.
- 3.6** The School QAE portal is used for annual monitoring of courses and programmes. Course Organisers review their courses at the end of each semester by examining and commenting upon student evaluations, External Examiners' reports, grade distributions and previous years' reviews. Programme Directors review all of the course evaluations at the end of each academic year to produce an overview report on programme issues. All of these monitoring reports are then analysed by the School Director of QAE and important issues are included in the annual review report for dissemination to School and College. The School is **commended** on the QAE Portal for the notable ease of access to information and the conditional release element.

#### **4 Self-evaluation overview**

**4.1** The review team identified the following areas as particularly successful within the Subject Area:

- **QAE Portal** - Online Course and Programme Monitoring. Notable for the ease of access to information and the conditional release element.
- **“You said, we did”** - an effective format for Staff-Student Liaison Committee meetings, with an accessible overview of student points raised, as well as staff responses (which play an important part in student satisfaction).
- **Tailored Careers Advice** - across the University careers advice is often at School level, which means that careers advisors are not always able to offer tailored advice to students. Where relevant, it would be useful for the University to consider tailoring the careers service specific to subject areas, as this subject area has done.
- **Forced Survey Responses** - requiring completion of course evaluation before revision notes are made available. This could be used more widely across the University to improve survey completion rates.

- **Action on Prior Feedback** - an initiative that supports students in utilising feedback effectively. Other subject areas across the University could benefit from a similar initiative.
- **Placements (as elements of the degree programme)** – this may be appropriate for other subject areas and Schools to consider, in order to improve the employability of students.

## 5 Confidence statement

The review team found that the Institute of Sport, Physical Education and Health Sciences has effective management of the quality of the student learning experience, academic standards, and enhancement and good practice.

## 6 Prioritised list of commendations and recommendations

### 6.1 Key Strengths:

1. The Subject Area is **commended** on the placement course which is a highly valued element of the programmes.
2. The School is **commended** on the QAE Portal for the notable ease of access to information and the conditional release element.
3. The Subject Area is **commended** for its use of digital media, particularly the Podcast lectures, to compliment and support teaching.
4. The School is **commended** on the readily available careers service tailored to the needs of the subject areas; with engaged and enthusiastic staff.
5. The Subject Area is **commended** on its accessible and valued team of administrative and technical Support Staff.
6. The Subject Area is **commended** on the format of SSLC meetings, and in particular the use “You said, we did” feedback.
7. The Subject Area is **commended** on the use of Learn for individual and cohort feedback, and in particular the use of forced responses to increase course evaluation completion rates.
8. The Subject Area is **commended** on the use of use of cohort feedback and feedforward from assessments, and in particular ‘Action on Prior Feedback’.
9. The School is **commended** on the organisation of the Personal Tutor system with Senior Tutors, Personal Tutors, and the Student Support Team working very effectively together.
10. The Subject Area is **commended** on the excellent dedicated facilities and the links with the University’s sports facilities.

### 6.2 Recommendations for enhancement/areas for further development:

1. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider a new strategic post with remit to lead and enhance the provision of teaching in the Institute.

2. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area, in consultation with the School and College, grow student numbers (particularly international and intercalated STEM students) in order to grow resources.
3. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider more ways to support Tutors, both PhD and external, and more ways of including them in decision making processes.
4. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area/School consider the creation of a dedicated role with responsibility for co-ordinating placements.
5. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider ways to improve the marketing of its provision both within the University and across the sector.
6. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider retitling its programmes (e.g. to include terms such as exercise, health and physical activity and possibly remove "Recreation" from the SRM programme title) to reflect current programme aims and content which may have evolved since it was conceived.
7. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area foster change in marking culture by enhancing subject area descriptors and encouraging fuller use of the ECMS, particularly the use of +80% marks.
8. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider opening more Y1 courses up to students from across the University.
9. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area consider encouraging more of its UG students to move on to its PGT programmes.
10. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area should ensure prompt feedback; where the 15 days cannot be met, clear explanations and revised dates must be communicated to students, and these revised dates kept.
11. It is **recommended** that the Subject Area take a more strategic approach to social media, utilizing full range of platforms to improve communication with students, the wider University and the wider community.

## C. Appendices

### Appendix 1 additional information considered by review team

#### Prior to the review visit

- Team Biographies
- Review procedure documentation
- Analytical Report
- School Quality Assurance Reports (2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15)
- External Examiner reports and responses
- School organisation chart
- Current School staff information
- Student Staff Liaison Committee meeting minutes
- Programme handbooks
- NSS results and Reflection (2012/13, 2013-14, 2014/15)
- Statistical information
- Subject Specific Remit
- Previous TPR Report
- Responses from previous TPR report

#### During the review visit

- Further evidence of excellence of the programmes within the Subject Area was noted with the Complete University Guide ranking Sports Science at Edinburgh University No 1 in the United Kingdom: <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings?s=Sports+Science>

### Appendix 2 Number of students

<b>Current Programmes Programme name</b>	<b>Type (UG/ PGT)</b>	<b>Semester</b>	<b>No of Students 2015/16</b>	<b>Notes</b>
BSc (Hons) Applied Sport Science	UG	1 and 2	186	
BSc (Hons) Sport and Recreation Management	UG	1 and 2	126	
BMedSci Sport Science Medicine	UG	1 and 2	8	Intercalated programme from Biomedical Sciences

#### **D. Responsibility for actions**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility of</b>
1-11	Subject Area
4	School

#### **Follow-up to the review**

The following reports and response are made in the first instance to Senate Quality Assurance Committee, copied to the Dean/Associate Dean/Director for Quality Assurance/Quality Assurance & Enhancement:

- The review report
- The 14 week response from the subject area/School
- The year-on report

Thereafter annual reporting on progress towards meeting recommendations will be made through the annual School report to the College Quality Assurance committee or equivalent, which in turn reports to Senate Quality Assurance Committee.

Review Team  
May 2016

The University of Edinburgh  
Teaching Programme Review of Celtic and Scottish Studies  
15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016

## A. Introduction

### 1. Purpose of Review

The Teaching Programme Review of Celtic and Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh is part of the University's Quality Assurance procedures, and is complemented by the Senatus and College Quality Assurance Committees' monitoring and reporting, and by the External Examiner system.

### 2. Scope of this Review

Range of provision considered by the review:

Celtic and Scottish Studies have three main Undergraduate Degrees. These are the MA in Celtic, the MA in Scottish Ethnology and the MA in Scottish Studies.

Provisions considered by this review are listed in Appendix 1.

The TPR consisted of

- The University's standard remit for internal review (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/universitystandardremit201516.pdf>)

- The subject specific remit for the review, consisting of the following items:

**Item 1:** Review of provision for Education students

**Item 2:** Recruitment to Undergraduate degrees/visiting student numbers

**Item 3:** Staffing in Celtic

**Item 4:** The Archives

**Item 5:** The impact of the staffing, location and organisational changes of the Library holdings on student access and learning

- The analytical report prepared by Celtic and Scottish Studies and additional material provided in advance of the review.
- The visit by the review team to Celtic and Scottish Studies, including the consideration of the further material noted above.
- The TPR report produced by the review team.
- Following the review, action by the subject area/school and others to whom recommendations were remitted.

Membership of the review team –

Dr Gordon McDougall (Convener)  
Dr Mark Sprevak (Internal Member)  
Dr Sheila Kidd (External Member)  
Professor Mairead Nic Craith (External Member)  
Ms Anna Dighero (Student Member)  
Mr Stuart Fitzpatrick (Administrator)

3. The position of the School within its College

Celtic and Scottish Studies sits within the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures, one of eleven schools within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. The School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures comprises 159 academic staff, some 1,800 Undergraduate Students and approximately 500 graduate students from many different countries.

4. Physical location and summary of facilities

The location of all subject area facilities with the exception of the Archive are within the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures in 50 George Square. This is a relatively new/refurbished space, although provides some challenges to staff and students as it does not afford the same sense of community that the subject area's old location did, and the separation from the Archives is an issue for both staff and students.

5. Date of previous review

Celtic and Scottish Studies are a new subject area, although created in 2001 by way of a merger between the former Department of Celtic and School of Scottish Studies. The previous TPR of Scottish Studies took place in February 2010 and included the MA Scottish Ethnology and Celtic. An interim review of Celtic was carried out in 2014.

6. Analytical Report

The analytical report was prepared by Dr Neill Martin (the TPR Liaison) with input from Ms Christine Lennie (Senior Administrator), members of academic staff within Celtic and Scottish Studies, and the curator of the School of Scottish Studies Archives. A draft of the Analytical Report was also tabled at the February meeting of the Staff-Student Liaison Committee within the subject, allowing for student input.

## B. Main Report

### 1. Strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching

- 1.1 Celtic and Scottish Studies offer three main undergraduate degrees, the MA in Celtic, the MA in Scottish Ethnology and the MA in Scottish Studies.
- 1.2 The department offers joint provision in the Celtic MA with the following – Celtic and Archaeology, Celtic and English Language, Celtic and English Literature, Celtic and French, Celtic and German, Celtic and Linguistics, Celtic and Scandinavian Studies, Celtic and Scottish History, Celtic and Scottish Literature, Scottish Ethnology and Celtic, LLB in Law and Celtic.
- 1.3 The department offers joint provision on the Scottish Ethnology MA with the following – Scottish Ethnology and Archaeology, Scottish Ethnology and Celtic, Scottish Ethnology and English Language, Scottish Ethnology and English Literature, Scottish Ethnology and Scandinavian Studies, Scottish Ethnology and Scottish History, and Scottish Ethnology and Scottish Literature.
- 1.4 Celtic and Scottish Studies additionally offer four further degrees, developed in collaboration with the Moray House School of Education. These are owned by the School of Education, and are – MA (Hons) Gaelic and Primary Education (Learners), MA (Hons) Gaelic and Primary Education (Fluent Speakers), MA (Hons) Gaelic Studies and Primary Education, and MA (Hons) Primary Education with Scottish Studies. The review team **commends** the subject area for the range of courses they offered.
- 1.5 Celtic and Scottish Studies make use of fractional contracts in order to support the volume of provision on offer. They are able to draw on an experienced pool of tutors to support course and content delivery, and these tutors are also involved in the creation of course content. Celtic and Scottish Studies have undergone major staffing changes within the last few academic years, with a number of fairly senior academic staff retiring over a relatively short period. Many of the current staff within Celtic and Scottish Studies trained within the subject area as either Undergraduate or Postgraduate students, meaning that they have a substantial amount of experience within the University. The review team **commends** the subject area for the high level of engagement with and from their tutors, and further **commends** the subject area for the support of their tutors, and the involvement of tutors in the design and delivery of courses.
- 1.6 The fact that Celtic and Scottish Studies now exists as one subject area, as opposed to two separate areas, is both a benefit and a challenge. The two sides of the subject area work well together, but remain distinct. The main challenge this posed is in terms of ensuring adequate cover for teaching when a member of staff is on research leave, and ensuring that there is adequate provision for facilitating the range of activities that the subject area does and is expected to do. However, the subject area operates collegiately and members of staff do not perceive the separation of the two sides of the department. Staff perceive the separate disciplinary areas, but do not see this as problematic in practice. In some cases, staff from both sides of the subject area are able to contribute effectively to both sides of the department, and in a small number of courses primarily at Honours level are able to cross teach when required. The operational and administrative side of the subject area also function well as a whole. The review team **commends** the subject administration and support staff for their effective running of the courses and programmes.

1.7 The subject area caters to a large number of students, although high numbers of these tend to be visiting students, or students from other schools who are taking courses offered by the subject area as optional courses. Student numbers overall are high, but students of Celtic and Scottish Studies tend to be in the minority. The review team **commends** the subject area for attracting large numbers of visiting students.

## 2. Enhancing learning and teaching and the student experience

### Supporting Students in their learning

- 2.1 The review team see that the subject area have a clear and defined strategy for supporting students through their degree. Students have highlighted that they are extremely happy with the level of engagement that exists, and the sense of community afforded by the subject area.
- 2.2 The review team noted from discussions with students that they held concerns regarding the 'leap' from Gaelic in first year to Gaelic in second year, with the first year provision consisting of initial familiarisation with Gaelic and learning the basics of the language, and second year provision being markedly more involved, including workshops on oral and written communication skills, and reading in class in poetry and prose. There have also been concerns expressed by students on Education degrees regarding the relevance of some aspects of the Year 2 Gaelic provision to them. The review team **recommends** that the subject area review the provision of level 2 Gaelic courses with a view to improving the relevance of the curriculum for Education students', and the transition from pure language learning to language and literature.
- 2.3 There was concern from the subject area and students themselves regarding the implications for students who were undertaking joint degrees with Education, and how they would be affected by spending their third year of study away from the Celtic and Scottish Studies provision offered as they would be on placement. The students in the current cohort are currently in their second year, so there has not been a chance to examine the impact of the third year placements on students undertaking joint degrees at this point. The review team **recommends** that the subject area examine the wider implications of the teaching practice element of the Education degree, and consider a strategy for supporting continuing students upon their return in fourth year.
- 2.4 The review team discussed the support systems that existed within the subject area separately with students. Students expressed satisfaction with the amount of academic and pastoral support available to them, and were aware that the small size of the subject area was conducive to a supportive and familiar environment. Students also noted satisfaction in regards to the induction offered, and highlighted the relaxed atmosphere within the school. The review team **commends** the Student Support system in place in Celtic and Scottish Studies, which appears to be working well and fulfilling the needs of the students.
- 2.5 In meeting with personal tutors and administrative support staff, the review team found that the subject area have an effective support system with the size of the subject area perhaps making it easier for Celtic and Scottish Studies to offer a supportive environment than some of the larger subject areas. Staff noted that the role of Personal Tutor in supporting visiting students was considerably different from that for non-visiting students, and that this could prove slightly challenging given the high volume of visiting students undertaking courses within Celtic and Scottish Studies. Those performing as visiting student Personal Tutors were limited in what advice they felt able to give visiting students, and noted that meetings with visiting students tended to focus on course selection and

timetable populating. Staff noted that the International Office was useful in providing additional support in regards to visiting students. Currently each student has a personal tutor who is a member of staff within Celtic and Scottish Studies, and effort is made to ensure that students are allocated the same personal tutor throughout their studies. The review team **recommends** that the subject area consider strategies for better facilitating integration of visiting students.

2.6 The review team noted that there had been significant disruption to the student experience during the move to the new facilities of 50 George Square, including disruption to the availability and accessibility of the library and Archives. Students voiced displeasure regarding the separation of the library and Archives from the main teaching facilities, and had been unsure about the status of the archives. The review team **commends** the subject area in managing the process of change well, and **recommends** that there be clear communication to students regarding the current and future prospects of the library and Archives. The review team note that the wider University is undergoing an extensive programme of refurbishment and expansion and **suggests** that all due consideration be given by the University to the impact that these changes can have on the Student Experience.

2.7 The review team met with students and staff, and noted that there were three separate structures in place in regards to dissertation preparation and submission, one for the MA in Celtic, one for Scottish Ethnology and one for the MA in Scottish Studies. These dissertations were done over third and fourth year. The MA in Celtic provides a training programme for students in this regard. The review team further noted that students who are undertaking the dissertation in Ethnology prepare and submit their work in their final year of study. The review team **recommends** that Celtic and Scottish Studies consider introducing a common style of dissertation and shared taught elements in Third Year across all subjects in preparing for the dissertation.

### **Student Engagement**

2.8 The subject area demonstrated that it has an established mechanism for learning from and responding to the student voice, including good levels of involvement at Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings. The review team noted that staff were extremely responsive to student input and listening to student feedback, and were generally very engaged. The review team **commends** the subject area for listening to feedback and encouraging an engaged student body to actively participate.

2.9 The review team noted the positive sense of community, which in turn led to effective student engagement. Further, the review team noted that there had been positive changes made to courses as a direct result of student feedback, namely changes to the course structure of Scottish Studies 1B, and substantial changes to the content of course handbooks for Celtic Civilisation 1A and 1B.

2.10 The review team met with students over the course of the review. The contingent of students undertaking the Gaelic strand of provision who attended the meeting with the review team had been limited, which limited the input the review team could give in this regard.

### **Approach to promoting an accessible and inclusive learning environment for all students**

2.11 The review team noted that the subject areas practices are in line with the University's Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy, and ensures that these students who are in

need of a Learning Profile or Schedule of Adjustments have these adjustments implemented. The Senior Administrator in Celtic and Scottish Studies also receives copies of any adjustment schedule, over and above the normal requirement that a Schools Co-Ordinator of Adjustments and Course Organiser have sight of these documents. This helps to ensure that Celtic and Scottish Studies fulfil their obligations under the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy. Additionally, the subject area observes all mainstreamed adjustments. The review team noted that the Co-Ordinator of Adjustments within the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures is a member of staff from Celtic and Scottish Studies.

- 2.12 The review team were pleased to note that the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures intended to submit for the Athena SWAN Bronze Award in Semester Two 2015/16. The review team **commends** the school and subject area's engagement with the Athena SWAN Charter. The review team wishes them every success in their application for Bronze and **recommends** they pursue the necessary preparation for submission for Silver status as a mechanism for raising awareness of gender equality issues across the school and wider University.
- 2.13 In regards to the learning environment, the review team met with students who noted that they felt that due to the large number of visiting student present on degree programmes, those students who were undertaking degrees felt that this was detrimental to their overall experience for a number of reasons, including the fact that visiting students did not have the same depth of understanding of the subject as they did. This led to situations where material that had already been covered by students on degree programmes had to be recapped in lectures in which visiting students were present, and a feeling that visiting students were simply taking courses offered by Celtic and Scottish Studies because of a 'tourism' or 'tartan and shortbread' aspect. Students had also highlighted that they felt it would be beneficial if there was a dedicated space in which they could converse in Gaelic, or concentrate on aspects of the course provision which interested them, as students on degree programmes, rather than visiting students. The review team **recommends** that Celtic and Scottish Studies give consideration to strategies for facilitating better integration of visiting students, and also **recommends** that consideration is given to the provision of a stand-alone social space for Gaelic.
- 2.14 When speaking to students it became clear that those students who were undertaking full time degree study within Celtic and Scottish Studies desired space and time in which to meet up with their fellow full time students to discuss course work and simply be in the company of students studying the same content as them. The review team **recommends** that provision should be made for students on the same programme or related programmes to engage in peer assisted learning. Additionally, the review team **recommends** that Celtic and Scottish Studies should actively seek to enhance the opportunities for students to listen and converse in Gaelic.

### **Learning and Teaching**

- 2.15 The subject area has an impressive range of course provision. Workload models have been introduced for the current academic year in order to ensure a broad equity in regards to teaching loads.
- 2.16 The review team noted that the subject area are exploring ways to innovate approaches to teaching, using the FLIPPED/FLIP Classroom
- 2.17 In regards to prerequisites, Celtic and Scottish Studies have removed some prerequisites from courses and have seen the numbers on those courses grow. However, this has led

to situations described at 2.11 above, and the subject area noted that this had caused some difficulty with course delivery, as one could not assume prior knowledge. The review team also noted that this caused frustration for students undertaking full time degrees in Celtic and Scottish Studies. The review team **suggest** that consideration is given to the re-introduction of prerequisites in some courses.

2.18 In meetings with Students, the review team noted that most students at honours level felt that the number of lectures and tutorials they received was not enough. The subject area had previously provided weekly tutorials and a higher number of lectures, but had moved away from this model a number of years ago. The review team **suggests** that the subject area consider re-introducing weekly tutorials.

2.19 The analytical report and discussions with the subject area demonstrated a robust process for the development and approval of courses and programmes with a multi-layered approval process which included input from students.

2.20 The review team noted that innovative teaching ideas and ideas for possible new courses or course content were positively encouraged.

2.21 The review team had been asked to specifically address the continued use of the archival collections within teaching and learning, and to consider whether the archival collections were being used as effectively as they might be. The review team visited the Archive and Library Collections for Celtic and Scottish Studies, and were impressed with the historical significance of the collection. Archive and Library staff, as well as academic staff, support staff and students, had expressed frustration at the fact that the School was currently separated from the Archive following the move to 50 George Square, and that this caused difficulties in regards to students ability to effectively utilise the Archive and Library. The review team noted that there were concerns surrounding the Archives and Library Collections, and that students had felt there had been a lack of clarity surrounding the Archives and Library Collections, not only in communications regarding how to utilise and access these, but also in regards to the future of the provision. The review team noted that the 2012 Report of the Archives had contained recommendations surrounding supporting the ongoing operations of the Archives and Library Collections. The review team **recommends** that the School in discussion with College must give urgent consideration to the recommendations of the 2012 report of the archives, especially in relation to the financial model for supporting the ongoing operations of the Archive. The review team also **recommends** that the School produce clear communication regarding the current and future prospects for the Archive and Library Collections. The review team **commends** the Archive, Library Collections and the staff of the Archive and Library Collections as a resource in itself.

2.22 The review team met with both Students and Staff from Celtic and Scottish Studies. They had noted that both expressed desire to either take part in or develop courses which highlighted and prepared students for future career options following graduation. The Subject Area expressed a desire to utilise a number of subject area alumni in events that highlighted employment within the field of Celtic and Scottish Studies, or Gaelic language. The review team **recommends** that the Subject Area consider further development of courses and options with a view to the future career options of their students. The review team further **recommends** that the Subject Area explore possibilities with the University's Careers Service and willing alumni of working to highlight the possibilities of employment following graduation.

## **Assessment and Feedback**

- 2.23 The subject area reported that they employed various mechanisms for ensuring the appropriateness of assessment methods. This included a School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures wide review focused on Assessment and Feedback which had taken place in 2014 and had included student input. This review had been in response to concern within LLC regarding Student Satisfaction Survey Results. These student focus groups had commended feedback practices within Celtic and Scottish Studies.
- 2.24 The review team noted that the Boards of Studies Meetings within LLC are used to share good practice in relation to assessment and feedback. Boards of Studies meetings are mandatory and as such are more useful in this regard than setting up separate workshops for staff regarding Assessment and Feedback, as the turnout for these events had not always been high. The review team noted that this seemed to be a sensible way to approach discussions surrounding the effectiveness of Assessment and Feedback.
- 2.25 The wider School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures are examining the possibility of setting up further events for staff to look at the effectiveness of the range of assessments from an employability point of view, and to examine the extent to which the assessments in each programme assessed the skills gained through study, and not simply the knowledge gained through study.
- 2.26 Students also noted that there was considerable scope for informal feedback owing to the smaller size of Celtic and Scottish Studies. Students have ready access to staff, and are encouraged to discuss their work and progress if they felt the need to.
- 2.27 Later in the Academic Year, Course Monitoring procedures will require each department within the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures to carry out Teaching Review Meetings each June, during which the appropriateness of Assessment within each course will be considered. Following this, a report will be produced which highlights areas of good practice, which will be shared across the School.

### **Supporting and Developing Staff**

- 2.28 The review team noted that there were a number of mechanisms in place to provide support for staff within Celtic and Scottish Studies, including the Annual Review Process, which reviewed each member of staff's experience, including teaching, administration, research responsibilities, goals, and support and training needs.
- 2.29 Staff within Celtic and Scottish Studies also participate in annual Research meetings, where each full time academic member of staff meets with the Research Officer for the subject area to identify research goals for the coming year, discuss research activity and identify support needs for research provision, including the discussion of sabbaticals and research funding.
- 2.30 The review team heard from Postgraduate Tutors. The Postgraduate Tutors expressed satisfaction with the support and mentoring available to them, although this was not always as formalised within Celtic and Scottish Studies as it was in other subject areas across the institution. The Postgraduate Tutors stated that their workload was always manageable, and that they felt at ease in taking any concerns or queries to more senior members of staff within Celtic and Scottish Studies.
- 2.31 Postgraduate Tutors noted that they felt that they were treated as colleagues, rather than PhD Students or recent PhD Graduates undertaking development, and that this was welcomed. Although there was no formal training offered in regards to teaching within

Celtic and Scottish Studies, Postgraduate Tutors are aware of provision available through the Institute for Academic Development. However, it was felt that any needs are adequately addressed informally within Celtic and Scottish Studies owing to the small nature of the Department, and that talking to more senior members of staff with direct experience made Postgraduate Tutors feel better equipped and prepared than attending a generic session in the Institute for Academic Development.

2.32 The review team **commends** Celtic and Scottish Studies for the high level of effective engagement with postgraduate tutors.

### 3. Academic Standards

3.1 All Undergraduate provision is mapped to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

3.2 The review team noted that all new courses or significant curriculum changes are discussed and ratified by the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures Board of Studies, which a member of staff from Celtic and Scottish Studies currently convened. The Board of Studies also discusses new Degree proposals or changes to Degree programmes, before these are passed to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Committee (CUGLAT) for approval.

3.3 The External Examiners oversee the examination process within Celtic and Scottish Studies. Examination questions are considered internally and sent to External Examiners for comment or suggestions. During the examination diet, all examination scripts and assessed coursework are made available to External Examiners, who during marking examine borderline marks, and also provide advice and adjudication in certain instances where internal examiners are not in agreement on a particular mark. Reports from External Examiners are formally tabled and discussed at Quality Assurance Meetings.

3.4 The Senior Administrator in Celtic and Scottish Studies liaises directly with External Examiners in regard to the approval of examination questions and papers, their attendance at Boards of Examiners meetings, and providing External Examiners with material for moderation. There have also been examples of comments from External Examiners leading to enhancement of elements of courses and assessment. It was evident that Celtic and Scottish Studies are responsive to the key themes that arise from External Examiner reports and Student feedback.

3.5 The Review team **commends** Celtic and Scottish Studies for their responsiveness to feedback from both external examiners and students.

### 4. Collaborative Activity

4.1 Celtic and Scottish Studies are involved in collaborative activity with the National Piping Centre, which is based in Glasgow. The course is organised within Celtic and Scottish Studies but is delivered by staff from the National Piping Centre. This course has been set up at the request of the Principal. It has been approved by the relevant Boards of Studies and assessment is carried out in line with relevant University criteria and marks are ratified by the Celtic and Scottish Studies Board of Examiners. The marking is carried out by National Piping Centre staff and marks are moderated by the Course Organiser, a member of staff from Celtic and Scottish Studies who specialises in Piping Research, as well as being a semi-professional piper himself.

- 4.2 The student numbers for the above course are capped at no more than 10 students per semester. The review team noted that this course was only open to visiting students.
- 4.3 The course has been in existence since academic year 2011-12. In the first two years of the course's existence, mark discrepancies between practical assessment and written assessment were high. Celtic and Scottish Studies has indicated that this was due to staff at the National Piping Centre being unfamiliar with the University of Edinburgh's Common Marking Scheme, and careful moderation has been undertaken by the Course Organiser as a result of this. These issues have become less of a concern as staff from the National Piping Centre became more conversant with University marking procedures and the Common Marking Scheme.
- 4.4 The review team noted that Celtic and Scottish Studies has joint provision with the School of Education. These four degrees have been developed in collaboration with the School of Education and have been introduced in academic year 2014-15. These degrees are owned by the School of Education.
- 4.5 These Education degrees are structured in a way which causes concern in Celtic and Scottish Studies, as students undertaking these degrees will not participate in any Celtic and Scottish Studies courses during their third year, owing to the third year of the degree being spent on placement for professional purposes. This leads to students on the Education degrees re-entering honours level SCQF Level 10 study of Celtic and Scottish Studies after a year away from the environment. Although this issue has not materialised yet, owing to the cohort of students in question currently being in their second year of study.
- 4.6 The department of Celtic and Scottish Studies has an ERASMUS exchange link with University College Cork. The review team noted that although Celtic and Scottish Studies is a comparatively small subject area, it is important that this exchange agreement is maintained. Celtic and Scottish Studies have reported that the feasibility of continuing this ERASMUS link has been questioned as the uptake seemed to be relatively low in comparison to other exchange agreements not only within the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures but within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. In discussions with students, the review team noted that few students seem to be aware of the opportunity to participate in this exchange, and had voiced interest when it had been mentioned. Exchange agreements for all subjects, regardless of size, are important in enhancing the student experience and providing students with a chance to expand their learning opportunities throughout their degree. Exchange agreements are also key to strengthening links between the University and other Higher Education Institutions. The review team **commends** Celtic and Scottish Studies ERASMUS link with Cork, and noted that beyond commendation, it is an essential strategic element for Celtic and Scottish Studies to maintain the link with University College Cork. The review team **recommends** that Celtic and Scottish Studies maintain the ERASMUS link with University College Cork, and take action to ensure that all students, including applicants, are made aware of this exchange opportunity. Given the small numbers of students involved, and the very limited opportunities for forming any other relevant ERASMUS links, this exchange link should not be subject to the same expectations of reciprocity as other, larger exchange agreements.

## 5. Self-evaluation Overview

- 5.1 The review team identified the following areas as particularly successful within the subject area:

- 5.2 The quality of teaching and the responsiveness to student feedback wherever this had been sought. The review team also noted that Celtic and Scottish Studies had been awarded Best Subject Area in the Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) Awards in 2012-13, and continued to receive nominations for academic members of staff in recognition of their teaching and feedback practices in the EUSA Teaching Awards;
- 5.3 The quality and importance of the Archives and Library Services, not only as a resource, but the passion that the staff involved in their delivery and upkeep had for what they were doing. The review team specifically **commends** the Archive and Library Collections and their staff as a resource in themselves, and **recommends** that urgent consideration be given to the contents and recommendations of the 2012 Report on the Archives, especially in relation to the financial model for supporting their ongoing operation.
- 5.4 The involvement of tutors in design and delivery of courses, and the inclusive nature of Celtic and Scottish Studies toward their postgraduate tutor staff;
- 5.5 The review team noted that Celtic and Scottish Studies received a proportionally high number of applications, but that this did not translate into the number of students that joined the subject area each year. Celtic and Scottish Studies had asked that the review team consider how recruitment could be improved, as they recruited in single figures on to Undergraduate Degrees. The review team **commends** the fact that the package of provision offered by Celtic and Scottish Studies is entirely unique, and that this should be highlighted. The review team **recommends** that the provision offered by Celtic and Scottish Studies continues to be highlighted as a unique selling point. The review **recommends** that the College Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Committee undertakes a review of the admissions policy and process with a view to allowing subject areas greater engagement with the quality and number of entrants. The review team noted that it was common to find a certain level of detachment between Schools, Subject Areas and the University's overall admissions process. The review team did note that this was partly necessary to ensure consistent standards in regards to the treatment of applicants, but nonetheless this disassociated Schools and Subject Areas from the process. The review team **suggested** that, for smaller subjects where there was potential for a closer relationship with the applicant all the way through the process, this should be allowed to happen.
- 5.6 The review team noted that Celtic and Scottish Studies staff and students have undergone a substantial challenge in regards to the move of facilities from their previous home to 50 George Square. The review team **commends** Celtic and Scottish Studies staff and students for the way in which they have handled the challenges brought on by this relocation, particularly the separation of the subject area from their Archive and Library Collections.

## 6. Confidence Statement

- 6.1 The review team found that Celtic and Scottish Studies has effective management of the quality of the student learning experience, academic standards, and enhancement and good practice.

## 7. Prioritised List of Commendations and Recommendations

### Key Strengths

Priority	Section	Commendation
1	2.21 & 5.3	The review team <b>commends</b> the Archive and Library Collections and the Staff of the Archive and Library Collections as a resource in itself
2	4.6	The review team <b>commends</b> Celtic and Scottish Studies' ERASMUS link with Cork, and noted that beyond commendation, it was an essential strategic element for Celtic and Scottish Studies to maintain this link with University College Cork
3	2.8	The review team <b>commends</b> the subject area for listening to feedback and encouraging an engaged student body to actively participate
4	3.5	The review team <b>commends</b> Celtic and Scottish Studies for their responsiveness to feedback from both External Examiners and students
5	1.6	The review team <b>commends</b> the subject administration and support staff for their efforts and contributions in the effective running of the courses and programmes
6	2.4	The review team <b>commends</b> the Student Support system in place in Celtic and Scottish Studies, which appears to be working well and fulfilling the needs of the students
7	1.4	The review team <b>commends</b> the subject area for the range of courses that they offered
8	1.7	The review team <b>commends</b> the subject area for attracting large numbers of visiting students
9	5.5	The review team <b>commends</b> the fact that the package of provision offered by Celtic and Scottish Studies is entirely unique
10	1.5	The review team <b>commends</b> the subject area for the high level of engagement with and from their tutors
11	2.32	The review team <b>commends</b> Celtic and Scottish Studies for the high level of effective engagement with postgraduate tutors
12	1.5	The review team <b>commends</b> the subject area for the support of their tutors, and the involvement of tutors in the design and delivery of courses
13	2.6	The review team <b>commends</b> the subject area in managing the process of change well
14	5.6	The review team <b>commends</b> Celtic and Scottish Studies staff and students for the way in which they handle the challenges brought on by this relocation, particularly the separation of the subject area from their Archive and Library Collections
15	2.12	The review team <b>commends</b> the School and subject area's engagement with the Athena Swan Charter

## Recommendations for enhancement/Areas for further development

Priority	Section	Recommendation	Responsibility
1	2.21	The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School, in discussion with College must give urgent consideration to the recommendations of the 2012 Report of the Archives, especially in relation to the financial model for supporting the ongoing operation of the Archive	School of Literatures, Languages, and Cultures Management Team
2	2.2	The review team <b>recommends</b> that the subject area review the provision of level 2 Gaelic courses with a view to improving the relevance of the curriculum for education students, and the transition from pure language learning to language and literature	Celtic and Scottish Studies
3	2.6	The review team <b>recommends</b> that there be clear communication to students regarding the current and future prospects of the library and archives	Celtic and Scottish Studies
4	4.6	The review team <b>recommends</b> that Celtic and Scottish Studies maintain the ERASMUS link with University College Cork, and take action to ensure that all students, including applicants, were made aware of this exchange opportunity	School Exchange Co-ordinator, Celtic and Scottish Studies Management, LLC Management Team
5	2.7	The review team <b>recommends</b> that Celtic and Scottish Studies give due consideration to having a common style of dissertation and shared taught elements in Third Year across all subjects in preparing for the dissertation	Celtic and Scottish Studies
6	2.5 & 2.13	The review team <b>recommends</b> that the subject area consider strategies for better facilitating integration of visiting students	Celtic and Scottish Studies
7	5.5	The review team <b>recommends</b> that the College Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Committee undertake a review of the admissions policy and process with a view to allowing subject areas greater engagement with the quality and number of entrants	College of Humanities and Social Science Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Committee
8	2.3	The review team <b>recommends</b> that the subject area examine the wider implications for the teaching practice element of the Education degree, and consider a strategy for continuing students upon their return in fourth year	Celtic and Scottish Studies
9	2.14	The review team <b>recommends</b> that provision should be made for students on the same programme or related programmes to engage in peer assisted learning	Celtic and Scottish Studies
10	2.14 & 2.13	The review team <b>recommends</b> that Celtic and Scottish Studies should actively seek to enhance opportunities for students to listen and converse in Gaelic	Celtic and Scottish Studies

		In addition that consideration be given to the provision of a standalone social space for Gaelic	
11	2.22	The review team <b>recommends</b> that the subject area consider further development of courses and options with a view to future career options of their students.  In addition the subject area explore possibilities with the University's Careers Service and willing alumni of working to highlight the possibilities of employment following graduation	Celtic and Scottish Studies
12	2.12	The review team <b>recommends</b> that the school and subject area pursue necessary preparation for submission for the Athena Swan Silver status as a mechanism for raising awareness of gender equality issues across the School and Wider University	LLC School Management Team & Celtic and Scottish Studies

### Follow up to the review

The following reports and responses are made in the first instance to Senate Quality Assurance Committee, copied to the Associate Dean Quality Assurance and Enhancement:

- The review report
- The 14 week response from the subject area
- The year-on report

Thereafter annual reporting on progress towards meeting recommendations will be made through the annual School report to the College Quality Assurance committee or equivalent which in turn reports to the Senate Quality Assurance Committee.

## APPENDIX 1

Celtic (MA Hons)	
Celtic and Archaeology (MA Hons)	
Celtic and English Language (MA Hons)	
Celtic and English Literature (MA Hons)	
Celtic and French (MA Hons)	
Celtic and German (MA Hons)	
Celtic and Linguistics (MA Hons)	
Celtic and Scandinavian Studies (MA Hons)	
Celtic and Scottish History (MA Hons)	
Celtic and Scottish Literature (MA Hons)	
<i>Law and Celtic (LLB Hons)</i>	Programme owned by Law
<i>Gaelic and Primary Education (Learners) (MA Hons)</i>	Programme owned by Education (new 2014/15)
<i>Gaelic and Primary Education (Fluent) (MA Hons)</i>	Programme owned by Education (new 2014/15)
<i>Primary Education with Scottish Studies (MA Hons)</i>	Programme owned by Education (new 2014/15)
Scottish Ethnology (MA Hons)	
Scottish Ethnology and Archaeology (MA Hons)	
Scottish Ethnology and Celtic (MA Hons)	
Scottish Ethnology and English Language (MA Hons)	
Scottish Ethnology and English Literature (MA Hons)	
Scottish Ethnology and Scandinavian Studies (MA Hons)	
Scottish Ethnology and Scottish History (MA Hons)	
Scottish Ethnology and Scottish Literature (MA Hons)	
Scottish Studies (MA Hons)	

**The University of Edinburgh**  
**Teaching Programme Review**  
**The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

**A. Introduction**

1. Purpose of Review

The Teaching Programme Review (TPR) of The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies at the University of Edinburgh is part of the University's Quality Assurance procedures, and is complemented by the Senatus and College Quality Assurance Committees' monitoring and reporting, and by the External Examiner system.

2. Scope of this review

Range of provision considered by the review:

- Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine & Surgery (BVM&S) Veterinary Medicine 5 year Programme
- BVM&S Graduate Entry Programme (GEP)

The TPR consisted of:

- [The University's standard remit for internal review](#)
- The subject specific remit for the review, consisting of the following items:
  1. Rebalancing of Content and Process, in terms of the curriculum
  2. Student Reward and Recognition, in terms of extra-curricular activities
- The analytical report prepared by The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies and additional material provided in advance of the review (*additional material listed in Appendix 1*)
- The visit by the review team to The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, including consideration of further material (*listed in Appendix 1*)
- The TPR report produced by the review team
- Following the review, action by the subject area/school and others to whom recommendations were remitted"
- Membership of review team

Dr Peter Allison, Convener  
Professor David Price, Internal Member  
Professor Jim Anderson, External Member  
Ms Carol Gray, External Member  
Miss Bobi Archer, Student Member  
Ms Toni Dismore, Administrator

### 3. The Position of the School within its College

The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies is one of two Schools within the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. The School comprises 105 academic faculty along with 26 staff from the Roslin Institute who provide the equivalent of 2 full time staff (FTE) to the formal undergraduate programmes.

### 4. Physical location and summary of facilities

Following the completion of the Veterinary Teaching Building and Roslin Institute building in 2011, all activities previously associated with the Summerhall Campus in Edinburgh and Roslin Institute in Roslin have been relocated to the Easter Bush Campus. The Easter Bush Campus comprises the following facilities:

- Veterinary Teaching Building – includes a cafeteria, lecture theatres, digital teaching suites, seminar room, dissection room, post mortem room, diagnostic, teaching and clinical skills laboratories, microscope room, library, tutorial rooms, ‘study landscape’, administrative offices, meeting rooms and gym.
- Hospital for Small Animals
- Equine Hospital
- Farm Animal Hospital
- Easter Bush Middle Wing – includes a break-out area, tutorial room and diagnostic laboratory
- F-Block – includes large animal clinical skills teaching facility, tutorial rooms and exotic animals teaching facility.
- Langhill Farm – the main farm steading is located 2 miles from the main teaching building and includes a teaching building with tutorial rooms.
- Sheep Enterprise Unit
- Roslin Institute
- Animal Research Facilities

### 5. Date of previous review

The previous review was conducted on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2010

### 6. Analytical report

The analytical report was prepared by Dr Claire Phillips, Director of Quality and Ms Lindsay Dalziel, VTO Manager. The report was reviewed by the BVM&S Learning and Teaching Committee and Board of Studies with student representation. The analytical report comprised of the Self Evaluation Report and Appendices prepared for the Joint International Visitation of the R(D)SVS on 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

## B. Main report

### 1. Strategic Approach to Enhancing Learning and Teaching

- 1.1 The School offers two entry points to the BVM&S programme. The 5 year Programme is designed for those leaving secondary education, while the Graduate Entry Programme (GEP) is aimed at those who already hold an Honours degree in an appropriate Biological or Animal Science subject. GEP students have an extended first year and then join the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 5 year programme to form one cohort of BVM&S students. While the School acknowledges that there have been issues with the integration of the GEP students into the main BVM&S cohort, staff and students have worked hard to address this.
- 1.2 The School holds five external accreditations covering the UK, North America, Australasia, Europe and South Africa. These accreditations are of particular importance for attracting international students. Holding these accreditations enables the School to follow the internationalisation agenda of the University, with AVMA (American Veterinary Medical Association) accreditation a particular attractor for North American students. The School is **commended** for this.
- 1.3 The move away from Summerhall to a single campus at Easter Bush in 2011 has enabled the School to make significant enhancements to its learning and teaching and student support. A close relationship with the Roslin Institute enables linkages between research, practice, education and funding opportunities for both staff and students. Leadership from the Head of School has been significant in driving improvements, particularly in how the School and Roslin move forward together, for which the School is **commended**.
- 1.4 The provision of a single campus for the School has encouraged redevelopment of the personal tutor/house system. This is supported strategically through the School's recruitment processes. New faculty are expected to take on personal tutoring responsibilities and this is made clear during recruitment and interviewing.
- 1.5 The Veterinary Teaching Building at the Easter Bush campus has been designed for optimum use by a specific number of students. It is therefore, the strategic priority of the school to focus on maintaining and enhancing quality in its provision of both learning and teaching, and, student support rather than on growing undergraduate student numbers.
- 1.6 The School is committed at all levels to the enhancement of the student experience. This was evident in the developmental approach to the review for which the School is **commended**. The School has developed robust mechanisms for ensuring and enhancing the quality of its learning and teaching provision. These include the move from voluntary to mandatory peer observation of teaching and bespoke workshops designed to develop staff with respect to learning and teaching.
- 1.7 Overall responsibility for the strategic direction of the BVM&S programme sits with the Learning and Teaching Committee. Changes to courses including curriculum and assessment need to go through this committee which has 'ownership' of the programme. Minutes from this committee are reviewed by the School's Senior Management Group which has overall responsibility for major policy decisions of the School. However it was not always clear, to the review team, how policy decisions and their implementation flow between these two groups. The review team **recommends** that the School reviews the relationship between the Senior Management Group and the Learning and Teaching Committee to ensure effective two way communication within the School. The review team believe that the key to addressing issues of curriculum overload lies with these two groups exercising their authority.
- 1.8 The impact of the School's strategic priority with respect to the student experience was evident through discussions with senior staff, though more could be done to make this, and other priorities apparent. The review team **recommends** the School ensures that all staff are aware of the strategic priorities of the School. The School should ensure that the strategic plan drives the day to day activities and planning.

## 2. Enhancing Learning and Teaching and the Student Experience

### Supporting Students in their Learning

- 2.1 The School is committed to supporting students throughout the stages of their journey. The School participates in widening participation schemes including LEAPS and Pathways to the Professions and holds two annual workshops to encourage secondary school students to think about a career in veterinary medicine.
- 2.2 The School is **commended** on its recruitment and conversion activities involving both staff and students. The School holds interviews with applicants both on campus and internationally (e.g. in New York) and appreciation of this was evident through discussions with students. In addition, the School uses Student Ambassadors, supported by the Student Experience Officer, to provide insights and guidance to offer holders ahead of their arrival at the School.
- 2.3 In recognition of the commitment and effort displayed by Student Ambassadors, and the role they play in conversion and student support activities, the School has established the Outstanding Student Ambassador Award. The award was initially instituted to recognise two students who went above and beyond what could be asked in the provision of advice to prospective students. It constitutes a certificate, small monetary reward and badge (akin to those nominated for EUSA Teaching Awards). For this the School is **commended**. The review team **recommends** that the School continues its ongoing commitment to the fullest recognition of their students and their contributions, such as through looking at how the Outstanding Student Ambassador Award can be included in the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) certificate.
- 2.4 The School is **commended** for its support to students experiencing difficulties transitioning across the years. There is a mandatory, non-credit bearing, course in professional development that all students who need to repeat a full or part year, due to failure to achieve academic standards, must take. This course is also available to students repeating a full or part year due to previous special circumstances on a voluntary basis, ensuring that support is inclusive to all repeating students regardless of their journey to that point.
- 2.5 Commitment to the Personal Tutoring system was evidenced by staff-student ratios of tutees and support structure flexibility. As programme content is largely dictated by external accreditation and professional competency requirements, the role of Personal Tutor is largely pastoral in the School as academic choices for students are limited. Students reflected that their experience of support was not dependent on who they are assigned as a personal tutor, as they felt they could approach 'anyone'. This whole school approach to student support is **commended**.
- 2.6 In line with other institutions in the sector, the School has a 'Note of Concern' system for alerting staff to potential student difficulties. Any member of staff or student can submit a Note of Concern online. Reasons for this can include concern over non-attendance or unprofessional behaviour. These Notes of Concern are then reviewed by a student support team, including the Student Experience Officer, who decide on whether and how further action should be taken. In addition, feedback on students is provided following their clinical rotations further enabling the school to detect and act on student support needs. These robust mechanisms are **commended** and are an example of best practice within the university regarding student support.

## Student Engagement

- 2.7 Staff responsiveness to student needs, both academic and pastoral is **commended**. The School has two peer supporter schemes; VETPALS which involves student run academic skills sessions, and a peer supporter scheme which is more pastoral in nature. The School has also arranged (and funds internally) for university counselling services to hold regular sessions at the Easter Bush campus. In addition, there are a number of student-led schemes that provide support, including the 'Vet Families' and the annual Welfare Week. Welfare Week is normally held in parallel to Innovative Learning Week (which the School does not officially participate in due to timetabling issues that would result from clearing one entire week from all years' schedules) and involves sessions run on maintaining wellbeing throughout the student journey. This is of particular relevance to the Veterinary Profession which is known to have relatively high incidence of mental health issues and an increased risk of suicidal ideation. These student-led projects are fully supported by the School and demonstrate the energy and commitment of both staff and students to creating a vibrant and supportive community, which is **commended**.
- 2.8 The School has effective mechanisms for listening and responding to student feedback. Each course on the programme has its own SSLC and changes are implemented relatively quickly following student feedback. Students the team spoke to reflected that "it is scary how much power students have". It was clear to the students that the School really works to accommodate them and respond to their concerns. Students are also represented on the Learning and Teaching Committee which has responsibility for making changes to courses. The School is **commended** for ensuring that students feel listened to and changing things where relevant and possible.
- 2.9 The School has recently introduced the EvaSys system for course evaluation surveys, which is currently being rolled out across the University. Course Organisers receive reports on these surveys which they then circulate to students with a response to their feedback. These surveys are also discussed at the Learning and Teaching Committee with examples of best practice shared in this forum. In addition, a traffic light system is being developed for benchmarking results of these surveys and comparisons year on year will be able to be made going forward.
- 2.10 The School produces a 'You Said We Listened' booklet which summaries changes made on the basis of student feedback. This is circulated to students and is available from various locations around the School. The review team **commend** the School for this.
- 2.11 The mechanisms for engaging students in providing feedback are generally effective. However, while the course surveys enjoy relatively high response rates due to paper completion, response rates are much lower for provision of feedback on clinical rotations. The School uses an online system (EEVeC) for providing feedback on their rotation experience. It was clear from discussions with both residents (who supervise rotations) and students that engagement with this system is not as effective as it could be. Students admitted that they rarely take the time to complete these feedback forms as they are time limited and online. The review team **recommends** that the School reviews the mechanisms for providing feedback to residents from students as it would be useful to their professional development as instructors.
- 2.12 With respect to National Student Survey (NSS), the School has an overall satisfaction rating above that of the University as a whole (90% vs 84%). This reflects the level of engagement and commitment of staff and students throughout the School.
- 2.13 Due to 'fitness to practise' needs of the profession, the School works on developing graduate attributes above and beyond those of the institution. The School adheres to the 37 Day One Competences established by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) mapping programme content to attributes ranging from effective communication to clinical governance. The School also provides a professional skills course to assist with developing graduate attributes in their students.

## Approach to Promoting an Accessible and Inclusive Learning Environment for All Students

- 2.14 The School provides training to those involved in the Inglis Veterinary Rotation in identifying and managing students with specific needs, as referred to in the Analytical Report.
- 2.15 The School includes skills development in how to communicate with clients with disabilities (including visual, hearing and mobility impairments) as part of the professional skills curriculum.
- 2.16 The School provides opportunities for students to experience diverse cultures and socio-economic situations. These include working at a young offenders' institution, clinics for homeless animal owners and areas of economic deprivation.

### Learning and Teaching

- 2.17 The School demonstrates effective mechanisms for curriculum design and development. The Learning and Teaching Committee has ownership of the curriculum for the programme. Proposed changes to courses needed to be presented to and decided on by the committee. Implications on programme provision are considered when deciding on changes.
- 2.18 In addition, the School has an Assessment Executive (ASSET) which has an overview of assessment on courses. It is currently undertaking a process of formal assessment pathways blueprinting mapping to the Day One Competences. ASSET is also responsible for ensuring exam questions are testing the relevant outcomes.
- 2.19 The team was impressed by the energy and commitment to enhancing learning and teaching demonstrated by the staff they spoke to, including the postgraduate residents and demonstrators. For this the School is **commended**.
- 2.20 The physical learning environment is appropriate for meeting the needs of students, with provision of a library and study landscape for private and group study. Students really appreciated that everything they needed during their time at the School was available on one campus.
- 2.21 The School has made some use of flipped classrooms with students engaging in directed reading ahead of class allowing class time to be dedicated to discussion based on the readings. Students who had experienced the courses where this approach has been taken, expressed that they found this form of learning valuable. The review team **commends** the School on the adoption of innovative teaching practices and suggests that the School utilises rolling out flipped classroom methods where appropriate.
- 2.22 Students on the programme are required to undertake selective rotations in their final year. While many are provided on-campus (e.g. pathology) the School also uses external partners to host students on rotation (e.g. Edinburgh Zoo). External rotation hosts are often established via informal networks, leading to more established relationships. While rotation hosts are expected to provide feedback on students via the EEVeC system, little guidance is provided on how to evaluate student performance while on rotation. The review team **recommends** that the School look more deeply at how to formalise Quality Assurance processes for selective rotations with external partners and how these relationships are maintained.
- 2.23 Students are also expected to take Extra Mural Studies (EMS) while on the programme to enhance their veterinary skills and knowledge in a work-based environment. This consists of 12 weeks in the pre-clinical years of the programme and 26 weeks in the clinical stage towards the end of the programme. Students must complete the 38 weeks of EMS with evaluations on their attendance and progress from their placement providers in order to graduate. All students are able to source EMS placement providers internationally with some international students electing to take up these placements in their home country.
- 2.24 The School has taken active steps to embed the One Health agenda into the BVM&S programme. The One Health agenda recognises that the health of humans is dependent on the health of animals and the environment. Two courses in particular (Animal Life and Food Safety 1 and 2) highlight this agenda to students. In discussions with students, it was apparent that they were aware of the One Health agenda with 'farm to fork' being a recurring phrase in their reflections. In addition, students are aware of talks provided by the University on issues affecting One Health and

attend those of interest, while acknowledging that none have yet to take place at the Easter Bush campus. The review team recognises and **commends** the progress made with embedding One Health throughout the programme.

## Assessment and Feedback

- 2.25 The review team were provided with the opportunity to examine samples of feedback provided to students. The team found there are many examples of good practice in the provision of feedback to students. The review team **commends** the School for this and suggests that the best practice should be shared.
- 2.26 Discussions with students revealed that there is a lack of consistency with respect to feedback provided on assessment, both in terms of quality and timeliness. Students felt that the quality of feedback was largely dependent on who was providing it and that it was not always clear from feedback as to how they should improve their future assessment performance. Students also remarked that feedback on in-course assessments was not always provided within the 15 working days turn-around time stipulated by the University.
- 2.27 The review team **recommends** that the School:
- i) Should undertake a comprehensive review of the feedback provided to students both in taught courses and selective rotations.
  - ii) Should pay particular attention to consistency of quality and timeliness (15 day turn-around) of feedback.
  - iii) Develop and establish mechanisms to ensure the quality and consistency of feedback to students.
- 2.28 Students on the programme are required to complete a portfolio for each year of their studies. The portfolio is used to evidence the learning outcomes of being able to be self-reflective and maintaining and organising records. Completion of the portfolio is mandatory i.e. a progression requirement. Presentation of all the required elements of the portfolio is checked by the administrative team who ensure that all required documents are present, with an academic member of staff (Course Organiser) responsible for oversight and internal moderation. There was a lack of clarity amongst both staff and students as to whether the portfolio is, in fact, assessed, how and by whom. While Personal Tutors do not have official responsibility for assessing the portfolio, they are required to discuss self-reflection elements with students as part of the second semester Personal Tutor meeting. Some students commented that Personal Tutors were not reading the self-reflection elements, while others commented that their personal tutor read their reflections and prompted them to write more before submission. The team's view was that potential conflicts of interest could arise if personal tutors have the responsibility to assess the portfolio, and that the role of administrative staff in evidencing the learning outcomes should be clarified. The review team **recommends** that the School reviews the portfolio, how it can be assessed and by whom, in relation to reflective practice skills and attainment of relevant Day One Competences.
- 2.29 With respect to achieving the baseline KPI of 80% satisfaction with their Personal Tutor experience, if this is based on the ESES dimension "Overall, I am satisfied with the academic advice and support I have received", then the School is achieving this KPI as in the 2015 ESES they achieved 87% satisfaction. However, only 66% were satisfied with the amount of time they had with their Personal Tutor, 55% with feeling their Personal Tutor helped them reflect on academic performance and only 53% were satisfied that their Personal Tutor had helped them reflect on how their learning contributes to longer-term aspirations.

## Supporting and Developing Staff

- 2.30 The School demonstrates commitment to ongoing development of staff throughout their academic career, with respect to learning and teaching. This is evidenced by the range of bespoke professional development workshops that the School has implemented. While the majority of the workshops are voluntary, however, all faculty are required to attend workshops in setting learning objectives and writing MCQ questions. Attendance for these workshops is audited. The team **commends** the School on these developments and suggests that the School commits further effort in this area and consider collaborating with SCQF.
- 2.31 The review team met with a number of PhD student demonstrators and clinical residents who have teaching responsibilities. Their commitment, energy and enthusiasm were evident in the discussions. None of those spoken to, however, felt that they had been given adequate guidance on what was required from them in terms of feedback to students or assessment. One PhD student noted that he was unable to answer his tutees queries on whether their work was of sufficiently high standard as he had not been provided with the assessment criteria. Another noted that training on small group teaching was not provided to him by the School and he had to self-fund his attendance at an IAD course on the subject.
- 2.32 Clinical residents are expected to provide feedback on students they supervise during rotations using EVeC. However, they did not feel that they had been given adequate guidance on providing this feedback and its implications. For example, they were unclear as to what would be the consequence of them recording a student's performance as 'unsatisfactory'.
- 2.33 The School utilises the skills of a number of research staff from the Roslin Institute to deliver teaching to students, as well as some external specialists. While the ability to select external specialists may be limited by the availability of said specialists, students reflected in their discussions with the team, that the quality of teaching by those not directly employed by the School was not always consistent with the School's own faculty.
- 2.34 The review team **recommends** that the school develops a system to ensure the consistency of quality and ongoing enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment, ensuring that all groups involved in teaching are included (residents, interns, PhDs and lecturers from outside the school etc.).

## 3. Academic Standards

- 3.1 The BVM&S programme is mapped to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Courses in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years of the 5 year variant, and the GEP year, are at level 8. Courses in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year are at level 9, 4<sup>th</sup> year at level 10 and the final year courses are all at level 11.
- 3.2 The School has robust and multi-layered mechanisms for course approval and assessment, including the Learning and Teaching Committee, ASSET and a Quality Assurance Committee. The Learning and Teaching Committee has student representation and overall responsibility for curriculum and assessment.
- 3.3 The School also utilises the skills of a statistician to check and balance exam marks on some courses, for which the School is **commended**. Given that external examiners did note at least one occurrence of marks errors, it is suggested that the use of statistical modelling be applied wherever possible to exam marks.
- 3.4 The review team noted that there were some inconsistencies with the application of marking schemes. Students were not always clear on where they had lost marks, and at least one student was told that marks above 70 would not be awarded. The external examiner report for 'The Animal Body 3' also commented on the lack of annotation of exam scripts, making it difficult to determine how marks were allocated. The review team **recommends** that the School ensures transparency and consistent use of marking schemes.
- 3.5 The School reports on the key themes from External Examiner reports and subsequent actions taken, where relevant, in its Annual Quality Assurance and Enhancement Report which is submitted to the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.

#### 4. Collaborative Activity

- 4.1 The School has no joint undergraduate degrees provided with other institutions.
- 4.2 The School has a number of external providers of selective rotations (see sections 2.22). This includes one provider at another Higher Education institution, with the Fish Medicine rotation being hosted at a specialist unit within Stirling University.

#### 5. Self-Evaluation Overview

- 5.1 Two areas stood out to the review team for deserving of particular praise – student support and faculty teaching development
- 5.2 The review team found the commitment of the School to enhancing student support and the building of an academic community commendable. From the Personal Tutoring system and Notes of Concern to Welfare Week, student support is fully embedded in the way the School operates. The School has an holistic approach to supporting students that involves all faculty, staff and students.
- 5.3 Schools across the University should be encouraged to look at the School of Veterinary Studies in this regard.
- 5.4 The review team found that the commitment to enhancing teaching quality commendable. The expectation that faculty should engage with professional development in terms of their teaching practice and the opportunities provided by the School in this regard are an area of best practice.

#### 6. Confidence Statement

The review team found that Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies has effective management of the quality of the student learning experience, academic standards, and enhancement and good practice.

## 7. Prioritised List of Commendations and Recommendations

### Key Strengths

Priority	Section	Commendation
1	1.3	The School is commended on the leadership from the Head of School which has been significant in driving improvements, particularly in how the School and Roslin move forward together.
2	1.6	The School is commended on its committed at all levels to the enhancement of the student experience. This was evident in the developmental approach to the review.
3	2.3	The School is commended on the establishment of the Outstanding Student Ambassador Award.
4	2.4	The School is commended for its support to students experiencing difficulties transitioning across the years.
5	2.5	The School is commended for its commitment to the Personal Tutoring system and for the whole school approach to student support.
6	2.6	The School is commended for its robust mechanisms for alerting staff to potential student difficulties, for example the Note of Concern. They are an example of best practice within the university.
7	2.7	The School is commended on staff responsiveness to student needs, both academic and pastoral.
8	2.7	The School is commended on the energy and commitment of both staff and students to creating a vibrant and supportive community.
9	2.8	The School is commended for ensuring that students feel listened to and changing things where relevant and possible.
10	2.10	The School is commended for its production of a 'You Said We Listened' booklet which summaries changes made on the basis of student feedback. This is circulated to students and is available from various locations around the School.
11	2.19	The School is commended for the energy and commitment to enhancing learning and teaching demonstrated by the staff they spoke to, including the postgraduate residents and demonstrators.
12	2.21	The review team commends the School on the adoption of innovative teaching practices and suggests that the School utilises flipped classroom methods where appropriate.
13	2.25	The review team commends the School for the many examples of good practice in the provision of feedback.
14	2.30	The School is commended on the development of professional development workshops to enhance teaching practice.
15	1.2	The School is commended on its attainment of international accreditation which enables the School to follow the internationalisation

		agenda of the University, with AVMA (American Veterinary Medical Association) accreditation a particular attractor for US students.
<b>16</b>	2.2	The School is commended on its recruitment and conversion activities involving both staff and students. The School holds interviews with applicants both on campus and internationally (e.g. in New York) and appreciation of this was evident through discussions with students.
<b>17</b>	2.24	The review team recognises and commends the progress made with embedding One Health throughout the programme.
<b>18</b>	3.3	The School is commended for its use of a statistician to check and balance exam marks.

### Recommendations for Enhancement/Areas for Further Development

Priority	Section	Recommendation	Responsibility
<b>1</b>	1.8	The review team recommends the School ensures that all staff are aware of the strategic priorities of the School. The School should ensure that the strategic plan drives the day to day activities and planning.	Senior Management Group
<b>2</b>	2.22	The review team recommends that the School look more deeply at how to formalise Quality Assurance processes for selective rotations with external partners and how these relationships are maintained.	Veterinary Medicine Quality Assurance Committee (VMQAC)
<b>3</b>	2.27	The review team recommends that the School: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Should undertake a comprehensive review of the feedback provided to students both in taught courses and selective rotations.</li> <li>ii) Should pay particular attention to consistency of quality and timeliness (15 day turn-around) of feedback.</li> <li>iii) Develop and establish mechanisms to ensure the quality and consistency of feedback to students.</li> </ul>	Learning and Teaching Committee
<b>4</b>	2.28	The review team recommends that the School reviews the portfolio, how it can be assessed and by whom, in relation to reflective practice skills and attainment of relevant Day One Competences.	Learning and Teaching Committee and ASSET
<b>5</b>	2.34	The review team recommends that the school develops a system to ensure the consistency of quality and ongoing enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment, ensuring that all groups involved in teaching are included (residents, interns, PhDs and lecturers from outside the school etc.).	Senior Management Group

6	2.11	The review team recommends review of the mechanisms for providing feedback to residents from students as it would be useful to their professional development as instructors.	VMQAC
7	2.3	The review team recommends that the School continues its ongoing commitment to the fullest recognition of their students and their contributions, such as though looking at how the Outstanding Student Ambassador Award can be included in the HEAR certificate. <b>[Subject Specific Remit Item 2]</b>	Student Support and Advisory Group (SSAG)
8	1.7	The review team recommends that the School reviews the relationship between the Senior Management Group and the Learning and Teaching Committee to ensure effective two way communication within the School. The review team believe that the key to addressing issues of curriculum overload lies with these two groups exercising their authority. <b>[Subject Specific Remit Item 1]</b>	Senior Management Group
9	3.4	The review team recommends that the School ensures transparency and consistent use of marking schemes.	ASSET

## C. Appendices

### Appendix 1 additional information considered by review team

#### Prior to the review visit

- Accreditation 2015 –Self Study Report and Appendices
- Analytic Report
- Course Survey Traffic Light Analysis
- External Examiner Reports and Responses
- Feedback Turnaround Deadlines and Dates
- School Quality Assurance Reports
- Student Handbooks (Course and Programme)
- Student Staff Liaison Committee Minutes
- 'You Said, We Did' 2015

#### During the review visit

- Examples of feedback

Appendix 2 Number of students

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
<b>5 Year Programme</b>					
<b>First Year</b>	119	125	129	130	131
<b>Second Year</b>	105	103	110	115	114
<b>Third Year</b>	85	121	109	108	118
<b>Fourth Year</b>	98	80	110	107	108
<b>Fifth (Final) Year</b>	87	95	84	104	104
<b>Total</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>575</b>
<b>GEP</b>					
<b>First Year</b>	62	68	66	51	51
<b>Second Year</b>	63	58	57	59	44
<b>Third Year</b>	50	59	54	54	55
<b>Fourth (Final) Year</b>	47	47	59	56	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>203</b>
<b>Total Overall</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>778</b>

## The University of Edinburgh

### Postgraduate Taught Programme Review The School of GeoSciences 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016

#### A. Introduction

##### 1. Purpose of review

The Postgraduate Taught Programme Review (PPR) of the School of GeoSciences at the University of Edinburgh is part of the University's Quality Assurance procedures, and is complemented by the Senatus and College Quality Assurance Committees' monitoring and reporting and by External Examiner system.

##### 2. Scope of this review

Range of provision considered by the review:

- MSc in Carbon Management
- MSc in Carbon Management online
- MSc in Earth Observation and Geoinformation Management
- MSc in Ecological Economics
- MSc in Ecosystem Services
- MSc in Environment, Culture and Society
- MSc in Environment and Development
- MSc in Environmental Protection and Management
- MSc in Environmental Sustainability
- MSc in Food Security
- MSc in Geographic Information Science
- MSc in Geographic Information Science and Archaeology
- MSc in Marine Systems and Policies
- MSc in Petroleum Geosciences
- MSc in Soils and Sustainability
- MSc in Sustainable Plant Health
- MSc in Sustainable Resource Management
- PG Cert in Global Environmental Challenges
- MSc in Carbon Capture and Storage (not running in 2015/16)

The PPR consisted of:

- The University's [standard remit for internal review](#)
- The subject specific remit for the review, consisting of the following items:
  - Common Courses
  - Dissertation Management
  - Recruitment
  - Assessment
- The analytical report prepared by the School of GeoSciences and additional material provided in advance of the review (*additional material listed in Appendix 1*)
- The visit by the review team to the School of GeoSciences
- The PPR report produced by the review team
- Following the review, action by the subject area/school and others to whom recommendations were remitted

Membership of review team:

Dr Gale Macleod (Moray House School of Education)	Convener
Dr Thomas F. Thornton (University of Oxford)	External Member
Professor Dave Johnson (Aberdeen University)	External Member
Dr Michael Rovatsos (School of Informatics)	Internal member
Miss Charline Foch (School of Languages Literature and Culture)	Student member
Dr Jamie Morton (Student Systems)	Administrator

### 3. Situate subject area/School within its College

The School of GeoSciences was formed on 1 August 2002 when the Institute for Meteorology, the Institute of Ecology and Resource Management, the Department of Geography and the Department of Geology and Geophysics were merged into one school. The School is one of seven within the College of Science and Engineering, and comprises 133 academic and emeritus academic staff, 93 research and project staff, 103 support staff, and 72 honorary fellows.

Around 900 undergraduates are admitted each year, along with over 150 taught postgraduate students, 40% of whom are from outside the UK. Taught postgraduate provision includes collaborative programmes (delivered the Business School, with Heriot-Watt University, and with SRUC), as well an online Masters degree and another accredited by RICS.

### 4. Physical location and summary of facilities

The school is distributed in several buildings across two university campuses.

The Head of School and the main administrative offices are located in the Grant Institute. The Grant Institute, the Crew Building and the John Murray Laboratories are located at King's Buildings, the campus around two miles south of the city centre.

The Institute of Geography and the Drummond Library are located in High School Yards, near Old College in the historic Old Town of Edinburgh. In September 2013 a new wing was opened at the High School Yards to house the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI).

Investigations are ongoing into a proposed brand new GeoSciences building, to be located in the NW corner of the King's Buildings campus.

The School houses a wide range of high-tech facilities and services for analysing and measuring the physical properties of rocks, minerals and fluids, for isotope analysis, and for scientific computing in geographic information systems, meteorological models and geophysics. The School also places a strong emphasis on field measurement techniques in ecological, atmospheric and earth sciences and is involved with a number of collaborative centres of research excellence and national analytical facilities including:

- [NERC Ion Microprobe Facility](#), Edinburgh
- [NERC Recognised Experimental Geoscience Facility](#) Edinburgh
- [Airborne GeoSciences](#) is a NERC Recognised Facility at the University of Edinburgh
- [NERC Geophysical Equipment Facility](#), Edinburgh
- [NERC Field Spectroscopy Facility](#), Edinburgh
- [SUERC - Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre](#), East Kilbride

### 5. Date of previous review

The previous review took place in 2006. At this time, the School was newly formed and the administration and management of postgraduate taught programmes was conducted within research groups and institutes. As a result of the previous postgraduate programme review the management and administration of postgraduate taught programmes was centralised.

The postgraduate research provision was reviewed in a PPR in 2012/13. The School plans to combine PGR and PGT provision in future reviews.

### 6. Analytical report:

The analytical report was prepared by the Director of Postgraduate Teaching and the Head of Student Services, in consultation with the Teaching Committee, MSc Committee, Postgraduate Student Staff Liaison Committee, and the Head of School.

## B. Main report

### 1. Strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching

1.1 The School's current postgraduate taught offering includes eighteen Masters and one Certificate. Staff are managed and teaching/supervision roles allocated by the heads of the three research institutes (Earth and Planetary Sciences; Geography and the Lived Environment; Global Change). PGT programmes are not specifically aligned with the groups' key strengths or reflective of the full breadth of research specialisms across the School.

1.2 Programmes are developed over time by enthusiastic and motivated staff, reflecting their academic interests and the School's desire to address emerging global challenges and develop graduates equipped to tackle them; programmes tend to be highly specialised (reflecting market interest and applicants' specific career paths), and are grouped informally into clusters of closely-related programmes; the resulting small cohort sizes are balanced by the use of common courses across different programmes, and the sense of community fostered within programme clusters.

The review team **commends** the direction of travel towards clustering programmes and aligning these with research activities.

The review team **recommends** the further formalisation of programme clusters, along with closer engagement between research activity and learning and teaching.

1.3 There are no formal mechanisms for horizon scanning, developing new programmes, or closing existing ones, although criteria are being developed by the Director of Postgraduate Teaching. The School is developing a strategy to grow its postgraduate taught student body significantly (doubling by 2030), developing a portfolio of programmes that continually evolves to reflect changing global issues and market opportunities. Academic staff numbers will grow to support the increased portfolio and maintain staff-student ratios; increased focus on teaching potential has been introduced to the recruitment process. New courses are also required to support this growth, and a new physical estate for the school is envisaged.

The review team **commends** the PGT Director and the rest of the Senior Management Team on the development of a school-wide PGT strategy and encourages further progress.

The review team **recommends** that in developing the PGT programme portfolio, a mix of top-down and bottom-up approaches to developing new programmes is adopted, drawing on both established centres of excellence and developments in new areas.

The review team **recommends** that the formal integration of criteria for assessing when existing programmes should be closed, suspended or further resourced into an annual review process for both campus-based and online programmes. The review team considered there were too many courses and one of the aims of developing the criteria should be to reduce the number of existing courses provided by the School and to present a more coherent framework for PGT courses in relation to the School's research programmes and strategic objectives.

1.4 Dissertation topics may be identified by students before arriving or during their studies and placements, or by consulting a catalogue of potential topics maintained within the School. The timetable for choosing topics varies between programmes, as does the submission date. A 'Dissertation Mixer' introduces students to external professionals for some programmes. Dissertation supervision is arranged informally by Programme Directors, who themselves often supervise a significant number of the students on their programmes; PhD students and external partners also contribute to dissertation supervision. External dissertation supervisors can lighten the load on School staff, but all students retain a supervisor from Geosciences. The School pays for external supervisors; practice elsewhere suggests it may be possible to secure external supervision without cost by promoting advantages such as advance access to future employees and providing a greater diversity of dissertation topics. Not all of the School's research areas are represented in the available

dissertation topics, and some staff are not involved in dissertation supervision. The emerging strategy aims to develop and encourage increased linkage between staff research and student dissertations, and embed dissertation supervision as a core aspect of the academic process and role.

The review team **commends** the School for establishing the Dissertation Mixer mechanism, and recommends exploring whether it can be extended to other programmes.

The review team **recommends** that the existing overview committee comprising the Heads of Institutes, the Head of PG Teaching, the Head of Student Services and the Head of School ensures that dissertation supervision is evenly distributed across staff (leaving specific allocations to Programme Directors), noting that greater conformity in the timetabling of topic selection and dissertation submission may help achieve this.

The review team **recommends** that all academic staff should offer specific dissertation topics and undertake supervision, and that this is incorporated into the School's workload model.

The review team also **recommends** considering establishing PhD students and postdoctoral research fellows as dissertation co-supervisors.

## **Enhancing learning and teaching and the student experience**

### Supporting students in their learning

2.1 The review team found that both academic and administrative staff actively and enthusiastically support students in their learning. There is particular focus in tailoring curricula to individual students' interests and ambitions, with Personal Tutors displaying considerable flexibility and effort to ensure student's course choices are accommodated, and administrative staff likewise ensuring that potential timetable clashes between proposed courses are avoided wherever possible. Students were very appreciative of these efforts and the added value they brought to their degrees.

The review team **commends** Programme Directors' commitment to providing individual flexible pathways through programmes as part of providing a high quality overall student experience.

The review team **commends** administrative staff for providing outstanding support and commitment to students.

The review team **recommends**, particularly in the context of anticipated growth in PGT provision, that due consideration is given to the workload of support staff and ensures that resilience is built into the team.

2.2 Students had some issues with pre-induction communications and managing all of the different activities scheduled in induction week, but otherwise rated their induction experience highly.

The review team **commends** the School's commitment to providing a creative and engaging induction week, particularly the use of fields trips/away days.

2.3 The School enables and encourages applicants to make course selections earlier than is possible via Path, with administrative staff processing their choices manually. This improves student experience, is an effective conversion tool, and enables the School to make early predictions of programme and course cohort sizes, and potential timetabling clashes.

The review team **commends** this innovative use of pre-sessional course selection.

2.4 The School also makes very effective use of alumni for marketing purposes and to provide feedback on programmes to applicants and new students; students have opportunities to meet alumni both in person and online via a LinkedIn group.

The review team **commends** this engagement with alumni in recruitment and employability initiatives, and recommends this practice is rolled-out across all programmes.

2.5 The School also provides bespoke training sessions for new students, on Learn, MyEd, UNIX and other key systems.

The review team **commends** this practice and suggests investigating the possibility of providing such training online prior to students' arrival, in line with student feedback.

2.6 English Language skills and requirements for overseas students was identified by both staff and students as the principal barrier to a successful transition into study. This is particularly true of written English, given the greater focus on qualitative assessment in the School of GeoSciences compared to most other areas of the College of Science and Engineering. Existing college-level IELTS entry requirements lead to admission of students whose English skills need improvement (raising the requirement from 6.5 to 7 for one programme has evidenced a marked impact), but the eligibility threshold for the highly-valued ELTC training available excludes some students who need help. The School is now considering using its local budget to buy in local ELTC training sessions.

The review team **recommends** that the College Learning and Teaching Committee permits raising of English Language requirements where requested.

The review team suggest that in the meantime the School continues to work with ELTC to ensure that students receive English language training assistance, particularly in the area of essay and dissertation writing.

2.7 While students were generally very satisfied with the quality of their Personal Tutors, there was some concern amongst both staff and students about the practice of Programme Directors also functioning as Personal Tutors for their students in cohorts of up to twenty; students feel that having a Personal Tutor who is also their Programme Director inhibited them from voicing concerns about their programme on the one hand, but on the other can enhance their access to the Programme Director. The tendency for Programme Directors to act as both Personal Tutor and dissertation project supervisor for students on the programme also limits the range of academics with whom students have contact, and leaves programmes unsupportable if a Programme Director becomes unavailable for any length of time.

The review team **commends** the commitment of Personal Tutors and suggests the School senior management team considers the advantages and disadvantages of separating the Personal Tutor and Programme Director roles, particularly in light of the desire to reduce the number of Programme Directors.

### Student engagement

2.8 Review meetings with staff uncovered many ways in which the School builds and supports the PGT community and encourages feedback and engagement: field trips primarily aimed at fostering a cohesive group spirit amongst cohorts are common, particularly in induction week; new students mix with new graduates and other alumni, in person and in online communities; activities are organised at both programme and cluster levels; administrative staff promote upcoming School events and available support; coffee meetings provide opportunities for reflection and informal feedback, some meetings including tutors, others Programme Directors; student conveners discuss agreed topics with the Head of School and Programme Directors each month; distance learning cohorts meet up with their Programme Director via Google hangouts for question and answer discussions about upcoming assignments and any other student issues. These informal feedback methods are deemed particularly effective, and are used in formal course reviews alongside institutional survey data, where some issues are perceived (e.g. timing of PTES, contradictory opinions captured).

The review team supports these effective methods for gathering additional feedback, and **recommends** that the Director of Teaching and the Senior Personal Tutor formalise the recording of all forms of feedback and resulting actions.

2.9 Students confirmed the value they get from such activities, and are themselves active in promoting students' communities, with some reps actively working to bring together online and campus-based

students, others representing whole clusters of cohorts or organising school-wide events. Students also praised the general accessibility of staff.

2.10 The School has been an enthusiastic participant in course evaluation via Evasys; surveys are tailored to cover the individual performance of the course organisers and other named staff as well as the course as a whole, with the feedback gathered being reflected on during annual reviews.

The review team **commends** this use of Evasys data in annual reviews.

2.11 SSLC meetings are deemed positive and constructive by both staff and students. Email is used extensively to communicate pre-induction information to applicants, though some students report not having received emails they were sent; likewise, email is used to inform students of training opportunities and other events and support, but uptake and feedback indicates that students often remain unaware of these communications, or fail to respond.

The review team **recommends** that the SSLC organises a joint staff-student initiative to audit existing communications and agree future content and methods.

#### Approach to promoting an accessible and inclusive learning environment for all students

2.12 The review team found that, alongside their general accessibility and dedication to students, staff in the School make great efforts to ensure students are fully integrated into their cohort and the wider student community. In line with the School's stated aim to address global issues, staff also place great value and emphasis on diversity generally. Students confirmed the diversity of their cohorts and the positive impacts this has. Particular emphasis is placed on geographic diversity, and staff reflected that increasing internationalisation across the University ought to be supported by a better service and induction experience for new international students, particularly in relation to English Language skills. The School also actively promotes equality of experience for online and campus-based students, and for students taught in collaboration with other schools or institutions.

#### Learning and Teaching

2.13 While only one online student was available at the review (from Carbon Management), the review team gathered very positive student feedback on various aspects of online learning and teaching: induction (suitably focused on programme mechanics, workload, and interaction with staff); patterns of assessment; staff engagement; advice on academic requirements and standards; online resources; Google hangouts instead of more onerous on-site meetings; value of interaction with a diverse cohort; courses tailored well for online delivery; overall organisation and value.

The review team **commends** the quality of online distance learning provision and technical support.

2.14 For campus-based programmes:

- Courses are all represented in Learn, and staff are also experimenting with representing programmes in Learn
- Grasshopper has been adopted for storing work
- CogBooks is being piloted for adaptive learning, to increase flexibility and self-responsibility in students' learning
- A flipped classroom approach is used to introduce online elements to campus-based courses
- In response to student PTES feedback, which has since improved, all assessments are now submitted online, enabling improved monitoring of plagiarism and use of mark-up rubrics
- Staff training in Learn and online marking is provided locally in both campuses, but a significant proportion of marking is still undertaken by hand
- Staff also use Learn and Turnitin to propose and peer review research proposals, bringing improved understanding of both the technology and the student experience.

The review team **commends** exploration of innovative tools such as CogBooks.

The review team also **commends** use of Learn/Turnitin as a tool for promoting staff familiarity with the student experience.

The review team further **commends** the use of flipped classroom approaches and encourages further use of technology-enhanced learning for on campus learning.

The review team **recommends** that online marking is implemented across the school, reflecting student expectations.

2.15 The limited availability of space has a negative impact on the school. Facilities are generally adequate but there is some contrast across two campuses. The ECCI building recently developed at the Drummond Street site is particularly well-received, and many of its positive features are being built into plans for a proposed new School building at Kings Buildings. The review team discussed training in research skills and methods with staff and with students. Training is already provided on many programmes, but is not always credit-bearing; such gaps as exist have been identified by external examiners. There are concerns over the additional pressures that existing non-credit-bearing courses put on students, and that introducing new credit-bearing courses would put on staff and on the availability of other courses within the DPT. Other areas of the University avoid impact on the DPT through a model where 10-credit research skills courses are introduced alongside a 10-credit reduction in the value of the dissertation. The extra load that research skills courses place on staff is particularly relevant given the planned growth in PGT provision, and might be mitigated by standardising high quality research methods training for all PGT programmes in the School where appropriate.

2.16 The review team also discussed the breadth of course choice available with staff and students. DPTs generally present a very wide range of choice, and Personal Tutors are very supportive of innovative course combinations, including provision by other schools, to meet individual students' personal career paths and ambitions. While this was highly attractive to applicants and highly valued by students (as reflected in SSLC feedback), in practice, choice is limited by timetable clashes and the popularity of some courses. This can leave students feeling that the degree of choice available has been misrepresented, requiring considerable effort from staff to mitigate. Part-time students, with their courses spread over two sessions, have more flexibility to avoid such clashes. Reducing the breadth of courses available can also make it easier to avoid timetable clashes between key courses.

The review team **recommends** that the School ensures that only courses that are definitely available are advertised under programmes, and, where known, anticipated timetable clashes are highlighted.

2.17 The burden of supporting such a wide range of courses can be reduced by having 60 credits of core courses or limiting the range of options available; sharing courses between programmes also reduces the burden. In growing PGT provision there will be a balance to strike between re-using existing courses and materials for efficiency, and introducing new core courses to ensure programmes and their cohorts maintain a distinct identity. Adopting adaptive learning techniques to provide flexibility within courses might also help balance any reduction in the range of courses available.

The review team **recommends** setting limits on the amount of choice available, e.g. by increasing the amount of core credits on some programmes and reducing the number of optional courses available

### Assessment and Feedback

2.18 Students identified a common issue in assessments being grouped at particular times ('spikes') rather than being spread evenly across semesters; this can particularly be the case for 5-week ten-credit courses, and for essay deadlines in semester two, where exams are less common.

2.19 Short courses can also be hard to provide early formative assessment/feedback for, and may require proportionally more effort than larger courses.

2.20 Few formal processes exist locally or institutionally for minimising deadline spikes across courses, and especially across schools. Staff actively identify and manage deadline 'diaries' courses resolve

spikes. Some academic staff see learning to manage deadlines for assessments which are published well in advance is part of professional development; this can be encouraged by setting intermediate deadlines for proposals and drafts.

The review team **commends** the School's use of deadline diaries.

The review team **recommends** that Programme Directors and Personal Tutors encourage and support students' management of their assessment schedules.

2.21 Students also raised a number of issues relating to the assessments themselves: the heavy reliance on exams in semester 1 may not be appropriate at postgraduate level, especially in core courses; exams might permit students to focus on their specialisms and interests, and not require them to answer on all aspects of the curriculum, or on only particular aspects; a more even spread of assessments across the duration of courses would enable students to better measure their progress, and is more familiar to overseas students; early assessments and feedback are particularly valued by overseas students and those returning to study after some years, for insight into academic competencies, study skills, critical thinking and requirements and standards for specific tasks such as policy briefs.

The review team suggests that Programme Directors and Course Organisers review whether there is an over-reliance on exams, and if so, if it can be reduced.

2.22 Students reported that policy on anonymous marking sometimes led to feedback not being given on draft assignments. The Head of Postgraduate Teaching confirmed that this practice is not School policy, and can be discontinued as the policy asserts that anonymity is only to be maintained until the best interests of the students are no longer being served ([Taught Assessment Regulations Academic Year 2015/16](#), regulation 39).

2.23 Overall, the School is actively seeking to develop processes to ensure assessment methods are appropriate for the level and subjects of study, and to avoid timetable clashes and assessment spikes while balancing the need for students to develop professional skills managing their workload.

The review team **recommends** the School reviews all 10-credit courses to ensure workload is appropriate, and consider withdrawing or combining courses or converting them to twenty credits as appropriate.

### Supporting and developing staff

2.24 The School has a school-wide process for sharing good teaching practice, and makes good use of Evasys feedback on staff teaching in annual reviews. Senior management also recognise the need for continuous CPD in teaching skills for all staff, and have initiated a catalogue of CPD activity. One hundred hours of development are scheduled annually for each staff member, along with workshops and online resources to improve teaching quality and efficiency, although competing demands on staff time mean not all opportunities are taken. Increased expectations on staff are to be met by additional support that is being put in place. There is no formal teacher training for new academic staff within the School.

2.25 There is less focus on Personal Tutor skills and performance in annual reviews, and refresher material for existing staff is available only at undergraduate level; many staff who act as Personal Tutors at postgraduate level can draw on their experience at undergraduate level, although many support functions retained by postgraduate Personal Tutors are devolved to SSOs at undergraduate level.

The review team **recommends** that the senior management team devises a clear process of developing and maintaining personal tutor skills.

## **3. Academic Standards**

3.1 Programmes are reviewed annually according to standard processes. Criteria have been developed to inform decisions about whether to commission new programmes or decommission existing

programmes. The School is actively developing and implementing a strategy to double postgraduate student numbers and is considering programme creation and approval processes within this.

- 3.2 Assessment standards and quality can be challenging to assess for smaller courses where statistical analysis is not valid. Where external practitioners are brought in to teach specific skills, course organisers are monitoring their input.
- 3.3 Around 40-50 students have an external supervisor, always with a co-supervisor from the school; external supervisors are briefed on the expectations for the role, and primary markers are always academic staff.
- 3.4 Dissertation preparation and format varies considerably between programmes; there has been some exploration of replacing dissertations with workplace placements. A common marking scheme instigated by the MSc committee may require some revision to be applicable across all programmes.

The review team **commends** the PGT management team's engagement with wider developments in the sector and with the institutional enhancement agenda.

The review team also **commends** efforts to define common standards and criteria for dissertations, and the use of external supervisors alongside internal co-supervisors.

#### **4. Collaborative activity**

- 4.1 The School collaborates in postgraduate teaching with the Scottish Rural and Agricultural College (SRUC) and Heriot-Watt University (H-W), as well as with other Schools within the University, and actively seeks new opportunities for collaboration. It is unfortunate that the review team were not able to meet with SRUC students; although time was provided and invitations were issued, no students attended.
- 4.2 The school has collaborative provision arrangements with SRUC covering 14 courses, as well as those offered to Heriot-Watt students. All such courses are evaluated by students via Evasys surveys.
- 4.3 SRUC support staff manage daily administration of SRUC programmes, with School staff taking over for exam boards; boards include all School and SRUC Programme Directors and one member of SRUC support staff. Each SRUC programme has a Board of Studies and MSc committee. Other University policies and processes such as marking deadlines, personal tutors and engagement monitoring have been successfully applied within SRUC despite some challenges.
- 4.4 School students on UoE programmes can and do take SRUC courses, and vice-versa; there is a mechanism for redistributing income between institutions accordingly. Better interaction is sought by the School management team on issues such as student expectations, sharing teaching and expertise across each other's programmes and courses, safeguarding against overlaps in teaching subjects, and general future direction.
- 4.5 Collaboration with other Schools and institutions is seen as important pedagogically and for research reputation, but is increasingly problematic to administer in various ways. There is no formal process for reciprocation of dissertation supervision between schools; it can be challenging to measure the relative input of collaborating institutions, as required by new regulations governing CAS administration; fee strategies differ between colleges and institutions. Income distribution models also differ, and assume all effort is direct teaching. Many such hurdles can only be removed at institutional level. There was some support for two-year collaborative programmes, with one year at each institution; this might remove some administrative barriers and free up staff summers for research, but could challenge students financially and would be unfamiliar in a UK market used to one-year Masters.

The review team **recommends** that the Learning and Teaching committee considers the barriers to cross-college collaboration and administration, and whether these can be removed or mitigated.

## 5. Self-evaluation overview

The review team **commends** the efforts and success of the School and all its staff in delivering excellent quality postgraduate learning, teaching and student experience without compromising on the range of options open to its students.

In order to ensure continued success during a period of significant expansion, the review team **recommends** that the PGT management team considers creating Programme Cluster Directors, and replacing/streamlining individual Programme Directors where appropriate, while at the same time aligning with broader research and other strategic objectives.

## 6. Confidence Statement

The review team found that the School of GeoSciences has effective management of the quality of the student learning experience, academic standards, and enhancement and good practice.

## 7. Prioritised list of commendations and recommendations

### Key strengths

Section	Commendation
1.2	The team commends the direction of travel towards clustering programmes and aligning these with research activities
1.3	The team commends the PGT Director and the rest of the Senior Management Team on the development of a school-wide PGT strategy and encourages further progress.
1.4	The team commends the School for establishing the Dissertation Mixer mechanism.
2.1	The team commends Programme Directors' commitment to providing individual flexible pathways through programmes as part of providing a high quality overall student experience.
2.1	The team commends administrative staff for providing outstanding support and commitment to students.
2.2	The team commends the School's commitment to providing a creative and engaging induction week, particularly the use of fields trips/away days.
2.3	The team commends this innovative use of pre-sessional course selection.
2.4	The team commends engagement with alumni in recruitment and employability initiatives.
2.5	The team commends bespoke training sessions for new students, on Learn, MyEd, UNIX and other key systems.
2.7	The team commends the commitment of Personal Tutors.
2.10	The team commends this use of Evasys data in annual reviews.
2.13	The team commends the quality of online distance learning provision and technical support.
2.14	The team commends exploration of innovative tools such as CogBooks.
2.14	The team commends use of Learn/Turnitin as a tool for promoting staff familiarity with the student experience.
2.14	The team commends use of flipped classroom approaches and encourages further use of technology-enhanced learning for on campus learning.
2.20	The team commends the School's use of deadline diaries
3.4	The team commends the PGT management team's engagement with wider developments in the sector and with the institutional enhancement agenda.
3.4	The team commends efforts to define common standards and criteria for dissertations
3.4	The team commends the use of external supervisors alongside internal co-supervisors.
5	The review team commends the efforts and success of the School and all its staff in delivering excellent quality postgraduate learning, teaching and student experience without compromising on the range of options open to its students.

### Recommendations for enhancement/Areas for further development

Priority	Section	Recommendation	Responsibility
1	2.14	The team recommends that on online marking is implemented across the school.	Head of School
2	1.4	The team recommends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exploring whether the Dissertation Mixer can be extended to other programmes.</li> <li>ensuring that dissertation supervision is evenly distributed across staff, with co-supervision by PhD students and postdoctoral research fellows (leaving specific allocations to Programme Directors), noting that greater conformity in the timetabling of topic selection and dissertation submission may help achieve this.</li> <li>that all academic staff should offer specific dissertation topics and undertake supervision, with this being incorporated into the School's workload model.</li> </ul>	Overview Committee (Heads of Institutes, the Head of PG Teaching, the Head of Student Services and the Head of School)
3	2.16, 2.17, 2.23	The team recommends: that only courses that are definitely available are advertised under programmes and, where known, anticipated timetable clashes are highlighted; that limits are set on the amount of choice available, e.g. by increasing the amount of core credits on some programmes and reducing the number of optional courses available; and that all 10-credit courses are reviewed to ensure workload is appropriate, and consider withdrawing or combining courses or converting them to twenty credits as appropriate.	Head of School
4	2.6	The team recommends that the College Learning and Teaching Committee permits raising of English Language requirements where requested.	College L&T Committee
5	1.3	The team recommends that in developing the PGT programme portfolio, a mix of top-down and bottom-up approaches to developing new programmes is adopted, drawing on both established centres of excellence and developments in new areas.	Head of PG Teaching and individual Programme Directors
6	1.3	The team recommends the formal integration of criteria for assessing when programmes should be closed, suspended or further resourced into an annual review process for both campus-based and online programmes; one of the aims should be to reduce the number of existing courses provided by the school and to present a more coherent framework for PGT courses in relation to the School's research programmes and strategic objectives.	Head of School
7	4.5	The review team recommends that the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee considers the barriers to cross-college collaboration and administration, and whether these can be removed or mitigated.	Senate Learning and Teaching Committee
8	1.2	The team recommends the further formalisation of programme clusters, along with closer engagement between research activity and learning and teaching.	Head of School
9	5	The team recommends considering creating Programme Cluster Directors, and replacing/streamlining individual Programme Directors	PGT management team

		where appropriate, while at the same time aligning with broader research and other strategic objectives.	
<b>10</b>	<b>2.11</b>	The team recommends that the SSLC organises a joint staff-student initiative to audit existing communications and agree future content and methods.	School
<b>11</b>	<b>2.8</b>	The team recommends formalising the recording of all forms of feedback and resulting actions.	Director of PG Teaching and Senior PT
<b>12</b>	<b>2.1</b>	The team recommends that due consideration is given to the workload of support staff to ensure that resilience is built into the team in the context of anticipated growth in PGT provision.	Head of School
<b>13</b>	<b>2.20</b>	The team recommends encouragement and support of students' management of their assessment schedules.	Programme Directors and Personal Tutors
<b>14</b>	<b>2.4</b>	The review team recommends engagement with alumni in recruitment and employability initiatives is rolled out across all programmes.	Programme Directors
<b>15</b>	<b>2.25</b>	The team recommends developing a clear process of developing and maintaining personal tutor skills.	Head of School

## C. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Additional information considered by review team

Prior to the review visit

- Analytical Report
- School Quality Assurance Reports
- External Examiners Reports and responses
- Subject Area Organisation Chart
- Current Subject Area Staff Information
- PGT Away Day 2015 material
- Student Staff Liaison Committee minutes
- Programme Handbooks
- Course Handbooks
- EvaSys Course Survey Results

### Appendix 2: Numbers of students

	2010/1		2011/2		2012/3		2013/4		2014/5	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
MSc in Carbon Capture and Storage	14	3	6	1			8		2	
MSc in Carbon Management							34		32	3
MSc in Earth Observation and Geoinformation Management									2	1
MSc in Ecological Economics	36	1	31	1	30	1	21		18	
MSc in Ecosystem Services			3	1	8	4	10	4	10	
MSc in Education					1					
MSc in Environmental Protection and Management	23	2	26	2	27	1	24		28	
MSc in Environmental Sustainability	35		32	1	25		25	3	16	1
MSc in Environment and Development	35		24	2	13		21	1	28	1
MSc in Environment, Culture and Society	10		13		11	5	14	3	7	2
MSc in Exploration Geophysics	12		6		15					
MSc in Food Security			9		6	2	6	3	4	
MSc in Geographical Information Science	23	1	24	1	34	3	25	4	19	1
MSc in Geographical Information Science and Archaeology					1		2		4	
MSc in Geoscience for Subsurface Exploration, Appraisal and Development	20									
MSc in Integrated Resource Management	10		3		5		3		4	
MSc in Marine Systems and Policies									7	
MSc in Petroleum Geoscience			16		13		24		36	
MSc in Soils and Sustainability					2		3	1	7	
PgCert in Global Environmental Challenges (Distance Learning)						4		8		3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>12</b>

# The University of Edinburgh

## Postgraduate Programme Review Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016

### A. Introduction

1. The Postgraduate Programme Review (PPR) of Postgraduate Taught Programmes in Veterinary Medicine at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh is part of the University's Quality Assurance procedures, and is complemented by the Senatus and College Quality Assurance Committees' monitoring and reporting, and by the External Examiner system.

### 2. Scope of this review

Range of provision considered by the review:

#### *On-campus programmes:*

Animal Biosciences (MSc)  
Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare (MSc)

#### *Online Distance Learning Programmes:*

Conservation Medicine (MVetSci)  
Equine Science (MSc)  
International Animal Welfare, Ethics & Law (MSc)  
One Health (MSc)

The PPR consisted of

- The University's standard remit for internal review  
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files//universitystandardremit201516.pdf>
- The subject specific remit for the review, consisting of the following items:
  - Item 1.** ODL student engagement: consider the ODL sense of community and support available and look at how they can ensure the best experience for students.
  - Item 2.** Communication: encouraging dialogue between students on the two on-campus programmes (Applied Animal Behaviour & Welfare and Animal Biosciences) and ensure that they feel part of the wider R(D)SVS community.
- The analytical report prepared by Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies and additional material provided in advance of the review (*additional material listed in Appendix 1*)
- The visit by the Review Team to the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, including consideration of further material (*listed in Appendix 1*)
- The PPR produced by the Review Team
- Following the review, action by the subject area/school and others to whom recommendations were remitted

## Membership of Review Team

Dr Peter Moles, Convener  
Dr Javier Escudero, Internal member  
Dr Mandy Nevel, External member  
Dr Ros Carslake, External member  
Miss Saskia Millmann, Student member  
Mrs Nicola Crowley, Administrator

### 3. Situate subject area/School within its College

The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (R(D)SVS) is one of two schools with the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. It is a world leader in veterinary education, research, and clinical practice, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. In the most recent Research Excellence Framework, the school was ranked number one in the UK. The School uses strengths in research to underpin and inform teaching and fosters the College ethos of “every student is a researcher, and every researcher is a teacher”

The School has approximately 780 undergraduate students, 207 Postgraduate Research Students and 45 on-campus taught postgraduate students and around 270 Online Distance Learning taught postgraduate students. There are around 126 academic members of staff and 213 support staff members across the R(D)SVS.

### 4. Physical location and summary of facilities

In 2011, all activities previously carried out at the Summerhall Campus in Edinburgh and at the old Roslin Institute building in Roslin were relocated onto a single site at the Easter Bush Campus. The Easter Bush Campus now accommodates the Veterinary Teaching building which provides the majority of the formal teaching facilities, student support facilities and administration offices, mainly supporting the undergraduate provision. There is large atrium, a cafeteria, two large lecture theatres each with a capacity of 202, two digital group teaching suites each capable of seating 48 students in groups with access to computers, a 100 seat seminar room, an anatomy dissection room, a post mortem room with a bio-secure viewing gallery and associated diagnostic laboratories, a multi-head microscope teaching room, two large teaching laboratories. There is a large library with capacity for 95 study places and six open access computers. The building also houses a gym.

The Roslin Institute building houses the majority of the R(D)SVS research staff. This building provides office and laboratory accommodation for over 500 staff. There is a cafeteria, a 300 seat auditorium, seminar rooms, and a range of research facilities. This is home to the MSc in Animal Biosciences.

The Hospital for Small Animals (HfSA) is adjacent to the Teaching building and also accommodates the teaching space for the Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare MSc students.

The School also manages a 250 hectare livestock farm in the land that surrounds the Campus called Langhill Farm.

### 5. Date of previous review

The previous review was conducted on 6th and 7th May 2010.

### 6. Analytical report

The analytic report was prepared by Prof Anna Meredith, the Director of PGT Programmes and Programme Director for MVetSci Conservation Medicine and Ms Susan Orr, Deputy Manager Veterinary Teaching Organisation.

The report was disseminated in draft form to programme staff for comment in January 2016. Student input was sought by means of a number of targeted surveys asking for feedback on

areas such as induction, the Personal Tutor scheme and other support mechanisms, feedback and assessment and the student community. All comments received were presented and addressed within the report. The final report was received by the School PGT Committee in January 2016.

## **B. Main Report**

### **1. Strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching:**

- 1.1. The R(D)SVS offers two on campus taught masters degrees: Animal Biosciences and Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare, the latter of which can be studied part-time if required. The four ODL programmes are offered on an Intermittent Study basis, which allows students to extend the time taken to complete each stage of the award (up to two years for the PG Certificate, up to four years for the PG Diploma and up to six years for the MSc/ MVetSci). For students who are working professionals this is an added advantage as it allows them a greater degree of flexibility to fit their study around work, family and/or financial restrictions.
- 1.2. The Review Team heard that the School aims to provide high quality programmes to meet the needs of the profession and produce graduates who will contribute to animal science worldwide. The School's Strategic Plan for 2015-18 highlights the aim to grow the portfolio of taught masters' programmes and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity and increase the number of PGT students for on campus and ODL courses. This is in line with the College's strategic plan.
- 1.3. The School has received University support and approval to develop a new Edinburgh Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Security and the process of appointing a Director is underway. The intention is to collaborate with partner organisations and create the potential for cross-University collaborations with the School of Biology, School of Social and Political Science, School of Geosciences and Business School.
- 1.4. The R(D)SVS are expanding their profile internationally. Their Massive Open Online Courses have been successful and have raised the profile of the School and have promoted courses at UG and PG level. When the Review Team spoke to the on-campus students, two students confirmed that they had joined the MSc in Animal Welfare after completing a MOOC.
- 1.5. The School has supported the development of e-media with the creation of the Digital Learning Unit which includes two full-time e-learning developers dedicated to supporting PGT and in particular the ODL programmes. The team support staff by producing material, addressing accessibility needs, copyright issues, helping with the virtual learning platform, supporting accessing information, providing direct course relating technical assistance and monitoring discussions boards. The Digital Education Unit recommend best practice and provide advice on technical aspects (e.g. recording onto PowerPoint). They are also aware of university developments (such as, Learn, Media Hopper, Talis Aspire) and can highlight useful online teaching methods. They also take part in the Staff Student Liaison Committee meetings and can comment on any questions related to technology or access issues.

### **2. Enhancing learning and teaching and the student experience**

#### **2.1 Supporting Students in their Learning**

- 2.1.1. The Review Team met with a number of Postgraduate Taught students, covering the on-campus and ODL programmes. The students said that they had chosen the R(D)SVS due to its reputation and the unique programmes on offer. They all agreed that the information on the courses available online was sufficient in order to make a good decision and that the application process was efficient and that the university was fast to answer queries and provided good general support. The international students mentioned that frequently asked questions would be helpful, highlighting possibly difficulties around acquiring visas and housing in Edinburgh.
- 2.1.2. The Review Team heard that at the start of the programmes, students are given access to two online LEARN courses, Welcome to Online Post Graduate Study at the Dick Vet (specifically for ODL students) and Academic Study Skills for Post Graduate Taught Students (for all PGT students). These courses aim to provide additional support for the transition into studying at PG level or undertaking online studies. They were developed and are maintained by the Digital Education Unit, in liaison with programme teams.
- 2.1.3. In order to support the School's vision of engaging all students in e-media, the Digital Education Unit was awarded funding from the Higher Education Academy to build a Transitions Hub, to help on-programme students and unconditional offer holders by providing a virtual space in which to access tools to help with their transition into and throughout their studies. This is an ease authenticated WordPress based social network which brings staff, unconditional offer holders, students and alumni together via discussions boards and blogs which is maintained by Information Services (IS) and held on the University's server. Supporting materials available in the Hub are provided by the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) and Careers Services, and highlight information on careers, further study and scholarship and funding opportunities.
- 2.1.4. The Hub is currently being piloted by the One Health MSc students who spoke highly of the system and the other online students were keen to be involved. The Review Team **commend** the Transitions Hub as a way of bringing students into their study time at Edinburgh and building alumni relationships and networking opportunities.
- 2.1.5. The international students mentioned that they can struggle at times with the language and the differences in cultural application of teaching and learning methods. The Review Team discussed the difference in cultures with particular reference to plagiarism. Although there is evidence that the students are provided with information about plagiarism in the programme information and the University regulations on academic misconduct, the Review Team would **recommend** that Students coming on programme have compulsory active plagiarism training e.g. Quiz, and that all submitted work at the point of submission includes self-certification of originality.
- 2.1.6. The Review Team would suggest that the school considers sending international students further information in advance on plagiarism, writing styles and techniques of essay and long answer writing, providing exemplars and to send information on the marking scheme.
- 2.1.7. The School asked the Review Team to consider the adaptation of the Personal Tutor (PT) scheme originally intended for undergraduate students being implementing at Postgraduate level. The University requirement is to hold at least three meetings per year. Attendance at these meetings is not mandatory. In light of the academic and pastoral support available to their students, the team find the number of meeting per year restrictive. There is a good support network in place at the School which includes the Director of Student Affairs, Senior Tutor and Support Officer. Programme Administrators also act as

Student Support Officers and first-line points of contact for students, referring them on via the appropriate academic or welfare channel.

- 2.1.8. ODL students are encouraged to speak to their Personal Tutor for advice on academic guidance and pastoral matters, either by telephone, email, live internet call or web-conferencing and to use the discussions boards for course related questions, enabling other students to see what is being asked and encouraging peer support.
- 2.1.9. Although the team were concerned over the implementation of the PT scheme, students spoke highly of the support they receive. This is also supported by the Key Performance Indicator which shows that the scheme is meeting the 80% student satisfaction rates as evidenced from ESES, NSS and PTES. However, the students did not necessary agree that the prescribed number of meetings had to be determined as there was strong support available across the School. The Review Team **commend** the Personal Tutor system which is well received by both online and on campus students.
- 2.1.10. The Review Team were encouraged that the PGT team were aware of the significant issue of mental health within the veterinary profession. The team are responsive to students showing signs of distress or mental ill-health and understood the support networks available to both staff and students. If any issues arise relating to course work, extra guidance is given and reasonable adjustments are made, but beyond that all students will be referred to the University Counselling Service or the Advice Place. Students can also access 'Big White Hall' which is a safe online space where students can share thoughts, worries and experiences with complete anonymity.
- 2.1.11. It was noted that not all members of staff, particularly the external staff members, were aware of the university guidance and basic training available to them, such as helping with distressed students, guidance on dealing with challenging or disruptive behaviour, or the Code of Practice on Student Mental Health.

## **2.2 Student Engagement**

- 2.2.1 The School is confident that there is a strong community and student voice which has grown on-campus, however the challenge is to provide the Edinburgh experience to ODL students. The Review Team discussed this with both on-campus and ODL students who all confirmed that they did feel part of the R(D)SVS and the wider University community and were very happy with the experience provided. The only mention of separation was between the postgraduates and undergraduates.
- 2.2.2 This sense of postgraduate community was enhanced by the use multi-media on the Learn VLE. The Review Team **commend** the use of short video clips by students at the start of courses which has helped to create a sense of community. This not only enhances the student experience but it also allows the team to assess the students' abilities on the use of PowerPoint, communication skills, and identify the student's level of presentation skills.
- 2.2.3 The ODL programmes make extensive use of technological facilities such as Skype chat, Collaborate, Twitter, Second Life, LEARN, Facebook and LinkedIn. The team support the learning of their students through blogs, online discussion boards, group work spaces, interactive tutorials, case studies, self-test multiple choice questions (MCQs), and access to written, video or audio resources. The Review Team **commend** the excellent technical support for ODL.

- 2.2.4 The Review Team heard the students are encouraged to utilise the library's online resources, which is evidenced through the use of Talis Aspire which provides an open-access list both for current students and offer holders. This provides a useful method for providing direct access to e-resources via the University library, and allows the programme team to highlight essential and further reading, and add guidance notes for students to direct reading. The Review Team **commend** the use of Talis Aspire as a resource for all students.
- 2.2.5 The staff and students both commented on the usefulness of the Staff Student Liaison (SSL) meetings and that the feedback from these meetings are used to inform change. The SSL for the ODL programmes work well using Skype chat so that there is a written transcript of the meeting, helping to facilitate the difference time zones. The Review Team heard that changes to the courses are made based on the feedback from students, however there is currently no way of connecting the changes made between each year, such as the undergraduate campaign: you said—we did.
- 2.2.6 The Review Team **commend** the careers day which also includes alumni.

### **2.3 Approach to promoting an accessible and inclusive learning environment for all students**

- 2.3.1 The Review Team were impressed by the level of academic attainment of the applicants, reflecting the School's aims to recruit the very best students globally and promote diversity through the schools widening participation strategy. This was evidenced in the outcomes of award. The Programme Directors confirmed that students, who were struggling to achieve the appropriate level for masters, would exit with a Diploma, although this was rare.
- 2.3.2 The School offers a number of scholarships and bursaries, allowing students from a variety of backgrounds to study on the programmes. These include the Edinburgh Global Health Academy Distance Learning Scholarship and the Edinburgh Global Online Distance Learning Scholarship. Students on the Conservation Medicine and One Health programmes have also been awarded the Commonwealth Scholarships, via the Global Health Academy allocation.
- 2.3.3 The School has developed ways of ensuring that students can access information, particularly if from parts of the world with limited internet access using Learn, which allows students to access course content without additional software. Students can switch to audio only or download content and read it offline. The team confirmed that the University's data analytics project would be beneficial to them in highlighting areas of student's online activity and help monitor student engagement.
- 2.3.4 The Review Team were asked to consider the ODL sense of community and support available. It was apparent that Programme Coordinators and Course Directors are dedicated members of staff who will work out of hours communicating the ODL students, ensuring that there is a staff presence online, not only as a specialist in their field, but who also acts as a connection to the School and a representative of the University community.
- 2.3.5 The ODL students were supportive of the Cafe discussion boards, an informal online space for students which encourages learning from each other. The online café was developed for students to chat informally, across all years of the programme. The PGT are planning on rolling this would to all programmes and the Review Team **commend** the expansion of the use of the online Café to other programmes.

- 2.3.6 The Review Team **recommended** that the Digital Education Unit consider how Learn could be more personalised for Online Distance Learning students, with particular emphasis on the home page. Although the students were satisfied with the online resources, there was interest in being able to personalise the front pages of Learn, so that certain links could be accessed more easily, such as the Library or a favourite group discussion board or Facebook page. The team agreed that this would be a valuable addition however due to the software packages, the options to personalise these pages is limited.
- 2.3.7 Students from the online One Health and Conservation Medicine programmes were also invited to a Global Health Academy Summer School in Rwanda for the first time in 2015. The Review Team suggests that the School continue offering these face to face options for ODL students and to consider ways of widening this to students on the other ODL programmes. The Review Team **commend** the summer school programme, including the availability of travel scholarships.

## 2.4 Learning and Teaching

- 2.4.1 It was apparent that the teaching is underpinned by research, with strong research themes and advanced clinical practice embedded into the programmes. The Review Team heard that the creation of the MSc in Animal Biosciences came about when the PGT team identified perceived gaps in the training of students to undertake basic research using animals and animal modelling and ethical reviews. The Biosciences degree gives a broader understanding on how to carry out research in a practical hands-on manner, although it is limited by resources. The Review Team **commend** the excellence of integration of cutting edge research into teaching.
- 2.4.2 The Review Team heard that the School has created a new residential elective course in collaboration with the Institute of Zoology (London) and Wildlife Institute of India, delivered in India. A number of the ODL students confirmed that this was a beneficial course and provided an opportunity to meet staff and other students. The School awards two grants, using endowments funds, to help students fund their travel to the elective in India.
- 2.4.3 The School has appointed an MSc Taught Programmes Teaching Fellow to support students through their project design and statistical analysis, created in response to a recognised need for specific support in this area. This post ensures that there is no duplication of efforts and staff are able to use teaching material available and created by staff across the R(D)SVS.
- 2.4.4 The PGT team have exciting plans for growth and they are preparing to offer four new ODL programmes due to launch in September 2016. All new programmes are devised using robust business plans and developments are made with strong market research, identifying gaps in the market that reflect staff expertise. It was noted that there is some content and thematic overlap with the current International Animal Welfare, Ethics & Law programme, which allows resources to be shared between the two programmes.
- 2.4.5 Some staff and students commented on cohort size and the impact an increase in student numbers has had on external placements, market visits and group discussions. The students felt that the School was not addressing what was being lost by the expansion.

## 2.5 Assessment and Feedback

- 2.5.1 The Review Team **commends** the use of innovative assessment methods utilised across all programmes. Students are assessed in a range of ways, from examinations, oral and poster presentations to essays, editorials and clinical essays and by using variety of methods, from blogs, submitting audio files with a podcast using Collaborate, presenting a piece of work to other students for peer assessment and commenting on abstracts. By using Collaborate, the programme teams can use a flipped classroom approach or short introductions on problems for discussion. ODL students will give an online presentation. They are able to see each other's presentations if the student presenting agrees. These are recorded for External Examiners. The Review Team **commend** the usage of Collaborate for the recording of assessments.
- 2.5.2 The students involved in the review requested more constructive feedback and feed forward, with comments on assignments and to see examples on what is expected of them in the form of best case answers or exemplars. There was also an issue of feedback not being provided in time of the next summative assignment.
- 2.5.3 The Review Team were concerned over the timeliness of feedback to students. Although the programmes have different methods of providing feedback, compliance with Taught Assessment Regulation 15 on the return of feedback within 15 working days averages around 50% of all summative and formative assessment over each semester, despite small cohort numbers. The main issues preventing compliance appeared to be based around the use of external assessors whose priority was research or clinical work. There was also a suggestion that some deadlines are too close together so some staff were finding it difficult to meet the requirement.
- 2.5.4 The students would like to see consistency in the number of assignments across modules. Concern over the length and weighting of assignments and marker time was also evidenced in the External Examiner reports. The Review Team **recommend** that the School ensure that the quantity and types of assessments are appropriate for the individual programmes and have some equity across the programmes.
- 2.5.5 The Review Team suggests that a formal training would be appropriate for both internal and external tutors and assessors. This could be delivered online. This would help to improve consistency and highlight a minimal service level for quality feedback. The Review Team **recommend** that the School considers providing Staff training on quality feedback and feed forward and the management of units of assessment so that they meet the turnaround time as specified by the university, including managing student expectations on feedback.

## 2.6 Supporting and developing staff

- 2.6.1 The Review Team noted that there was a 92% female cohort which reflected the veterinary profession but that staff appointments within the School were male dominated, however the Head of School was confident that that male to female ratio would be reflect in the recruitment of academic staff in the future.
- 2.6.2 The Review Team agreed that the R(D)SVS has managed to utilise the full potential of their staff and foster a climate where teaching is highly valued, making it a stimulating and successful place to work. The Review Team were impressed with the level of dedication from the PGT team. The team agreed that an enthusiastic PG Director has had a significant impact on the student

experience. The Review Team **commends** the excellent leadership by Prof Anna Meredith and the cohesive and happy team that she has established.

- 2.6.3 The School have embedded PG teaching as a fundamental role within the School. This has been achieved by using School meetings to highlight expectations of staff and successfully introducing a workload model. Overloaded staff can reduce work load or can highlight opportunities. This helps the School to position staff accordingly. The Review Team **commends** the approach of the introduction and utilisation of the work load model as a way of planning staff resources for the future. It was noted that the model is not used for audit purposes but is used as a plan to make sure staff have enough resource and support. Line Managers promote workload model as a planning tool during the appraisal process and is used as a means to identify room to take on other roles.
- 2.6.4 The Review Team note that the School actively promote staff gaining teaching qualifications (PGcert) and/or Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy.
- 2.6.5 The School recruits and trains a small number of PhD students to offer an extra level of peer support to new and existing students on their programmes. These students provide a range of academic skills guidance and general advice and support to their peers, allowing PhD students to develop teaching skills.
- 2.6.6 The School uses the educational expertise of external tutors in order to enrich the courses. This also helps to grow collaborations with other institutions and they believe this enhances the student experience. It has also created the potential for research and has led to UG collaborations and provided opportunities for collaborative dissertation projects and placements.
- 2.6.7 The Review Team **commends** the recruitment and approval process of external supervisors. The appointment of external supervisors follows a robust review process by the School's Assessment Panel. If there are any concerns with the nomination, the Panel may suggest that the local supervisor co-supervises to gain the experience needed for supervising in the future. A member of the programme team would also supervise more challenging projects due to their expertise in supervision.
- 2.6.8 External Supervisors are sent clear guidance and in some programmes, information showing the distribution of marks curve over last 9-10 years. All supervisors are provided with dissertation guidance and a description of supervisor role, which is available on Learn for the students to view.
- 2.6.9 External staff are integrated into the programme team. They are made aware of University regulations, invited to attend teaching committee meetings and Staff Student Liaison meetings and are involved in all programme governance. The Review Team would suggest that the School put formal arrangements in place for communicating course feedback and programme developments to external members of staff.

### **3. Academic Standards**

- 3.1 All individual course learning outcomes were revised in line with the Course Creation, Approval and Maintenance (CCAM) policy in March 2015 and are consistent with study at SCQF Level 11 (PG).
- 3.2 It was evident that strong QA processes are in place to validate new programmes, however this process covers new programmes only and not individual courses. The course content is reviewed by External Examiners and

comments are received at the Board of Examiners, however there does not appear to be a formal process for reviewing course content for PGT on a regular basis. The Review Team **recommends** that the School consider how the content of courses is reviewed and altered to reflect changes and advances within the subject areas.

- 3.3 The Review Team suggests that the Head of School ensure that the University regulations are adhered to when appointing Conveners of Board of Examiners, particularly when a Course Organiser is appointed, ensuring that the role is delegated to another member of the Board for discussion of that course.
- 3.4 The Programme Directors provide external markers with clear guidance on the University's common marking scheme and the course descriptors, however the Review Team suggests that the School considers implementing a formal moderation process across the board with clear guidance for staff.

#### **4. Collaborative activity**

- 4.1 The School has worked in partnership with Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) for many years. The Applied Animal Behaviour & Welfare, International Animal Welfare, Ethics & Law and the forthcoming MSc Disease in Livestock Ecosystems; Dynamics and Control programmes combine experience and respective expertise of both institutions ensuring that students have access to world leading staff and well-equipped research facilities across the full range of earth and agricultural sciences.
- 4.2 In the recent REF 2014, agricultural and veterinary research at the University of Edinburgh and Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) has been ranked as most powerful in the UK in the Research Excellence Framework (REF). The success of the research impacts positively on the teaching, ensuring students who study at the R(D)SVS are doing so in an atmosphere of world class research and benefiting from being taught by staff whose research is so highly ranked.

#### **5. Self-evaluation overview**

- 5.1 The Review Team were satisfied that the School had taken action to meet the recommendations made in 2009 and were impressed with the PGT provision's growth.
- 5.2 The Review Team was impressed by the cohesiveness of team working in the PGT team and particularly with the technical support provided for Online Distance Learning. Particularly impressive was the working relationship with course directors and module leaders from SRUC.
- 5.3 The implementation and use of the workload model in the school has clearly been successful and this could be used an example of best practice to other Schools and Colleges within the University.
- 5.4 The Review Team agreed that the range of assessment and teaching delivery methods utilised within the programmes, especially for OLDL programmes, is both innovative and effective and these could be shared as examples of good educational practice across the University. The Review Team would like the School to consider that as the portfolio of courses expands, the PGT team need to be cognisant of the demands that could be placed on e.g. digital media, statistical help and of course the staff. Currently there are a number of key staff from SRUC and ensuring new staff are fully informed of all the processes from tutoring, marking, course/module leadership is important. This is particularly so for ensuring

consistency across courses so that students on different courses don't get a completely different experience.

## 6. Confidence statement

The Review Team found that Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies has effective management of the quality of the student learning experience, academic standards, and enhancement and good practice.

### Prioritised list of commendations and recommendations

#### Key strengths

Priority	Section	Commendation
1	2.6.2	We commend the excellent leadership by Prof Anna Meredith and the cohesive and happy team that she has established.
2	2.1.4	We commend the Transitions Hub as a way of bringing students into their study time at Edinburgh and building alumni relationships and networking opportunities.
3	2.6.3	We commend the approach of the introduction and utilisation of the work load model as a way of planning staff resources for the future.
4	2.4.1	We commend the excellence of integration of cutting edge research into teaching e.g. Biosciences.
5	2.6.7	We commend the recruitment and approval process of external supervisors.
6	2.5.1	We commend the use of innovative assessment methods utilised across all programmes.
7	2.2.4	We commend the use of Talis Aspire as a resource for all students.
8	2.2.6	We commend the careers day which also includes alumni.
9	2.1.9	We commend the Personal Tutor system which is well received by both online and on campus students
10	2.2.3	We commend the excellent technical support for ODL.
11	2.3.7	We commend the summer school programme, including the availability of travel scholarships.

12	2.2.2	We commend the use of short video clips by students at the start of courses.
13	2.5.1	We commend the usage of Collaborate for the recording of assessments.
14	2.3.5	We commend the expansion of the use of the online Café to other programmes.

#### Recommendations for enhancement/Areas for further development

Priority	Section	Recommendation	Responsibility of
1	3.4	Consider implementing a formal moderation process across the board with clear guidance for staff.	School
2	2.5.5	Staff training on quality feedback and feed forward and the management of units of assessment so that they meet the turnaround time as specified by the university, including managing student expectations on feedback.	School
3	3.2	Consider how the content of courses is reviewed and altered to reflect changes and advances within the subject areas.	School
4	2.5.4	Ensure that the quantity and types of assessments are appropriate for the individual programmes and have some equity across the programmes.	School
5	2.1.5	Students coming on programme have compulsory active plagiarism training e.g. Quiz, and that all submitted work at the point of submission includes self-certification of originality.	School
6	2.3.6	Consider how learn could be more personalised for Online Distance Learning students, with particular emphasis on the home page.	School

## C. Appendices

### Appendix 1 additional information considered by Review Team

Prior to the review visit

- Analytic Report
- School Quality Assurance Reports
- External Examiners Reports and responses
- R(D)SVS PGT Academic & Support Staff 2015
- Student Staff Liaison Committee minutes
- Postgraduate School Committee meeting minutes
- Programme Handbooks
- PTES May 2015 results
- R(D)SVS PG Committee Structure

During the review visit

- Workload Model Template

### Appendix 2 Number of students

<i>Programmes</i>	<i>Mode of Delivery</i>	<i>Student numbers 2012-13</i>	<i>Student numbers 2013-14</i>	<i>Student numbers 2014-15</i>	<i>Student numbers 2015-16</i>
MSc in Applied Animal Behaviour & Welfare	On Campus	24 FT 3 PT TOTAL=27	28 FT 3 PT TOTAL=31	31 FT 5 PT TOTAL= 36	31 FT 5 PT TOTAL=36
MSc in Animal Biosciences	On Campus	9 FT	6 FT	10 FT	9 FT
MSc in International Animal Welfare, Ethics & Law	ODL	MSc - 22 Dip – 1 Cert – 10 TOTAL = 33	MSc - 49 Dip – 9 Cert – 3 PPD – 10 TOTAL = 71	MSc - 80 Dip – 5 Cert – 12 PPD – 8 TOTAL = 105	MSc - 76 Dip – 3 Cert – 9 PPD – 6* TOTAL = 94
MSc in Equine Science	ODL	MSc - 52 Dip – 1 Cert – 2 PPD – 7 TOTAL = 62	MSc - 44 Dip – 1 Cert – 12 PPD – 9 TOTAL = 66	MSc - 55 Dip – 3 Cert – 6 PPD – 19 TOTAL = 83	MSc - 59 Dip – 5 Cert – 7 PPD – 11 TOTAL = 81
MVetSci in Conservation Medicine	ODL	MVetSci – 15 Dip – 2 Cert – 1 PPD – 0 TOTAL = 18	MVetSci – 33 Dip – 2 Cert – 1 PPD – 0 TOTAL = 36	MVetSci – 42 Dip – 3 Cert – 1 PPD – 4 TOTAL = 50	MVetSci – 37 Dip – 4 Cert – 3 PPD – 5 TOTAL = 49
MSc in One Health	ODL	N/A	N/A	MSc - 7 Dip – 7 Cert – 1 TOTAL = 15	MSc - 12 Dip – 6 Cert – 2 TOTAL = 20

## **Follow-up to the review**

The following reports and response are made in the first instance to Senate Quality Assurance Committee, copied to the Dean/Associate Dean/Director for Quality Assurance/Quality Assurance & Enhancement:

- The review report
- The 14 week response from the subject area/School
- The year-on report

Thereafter annual reporting on progress towards meeting recommendations will be made through the annual School report to the College Quality Assurance committee or equivalent, which in turn reports to Senate Quality Assurance Committee.

# Thematic Review of Mental Health Services

## Report

March 2016

## Contents

1. About the Review .....	2
2. About this Report.....	3
3. Review Findings .....	4
4. Institutional Context .....	4
5. Mental Health and Wellbeing service provisions .....	6
6. Effectiveness of the management of the student support experience.....	9
7. Effectiveness of the management of quality and standards .....	11
8. Effectiveness of the management of enhancement and promotion of good practice .....	13
9. List of Commendations .....	17
10. List of Recommendations .....	18
11. Appendix One – Review Schedule .....	20

## 1. About the Review

- 1.1 This is the first thematic review of support services undertaken by the University of Edinburgh. Previous periodic reviews focussed on the review of a single service. Thematic Review is intended to take a strategic overview of strategy, services and user experiences pursuant to a particular theme that cuts across many areas of the University. The theme for this thematic review is Mental Health Services and took into account a range of student services and academic areas that deliver mental health and/or well-being services as a primary element of their remit or as one element of their remit.
- 1.3 Thematic Review forms part of the University's Student Support Services Quality Assurance Framework (SSSQAF) and is complemented by the Senatus and College Quality Assurance Committees' monitoring and reporting. Further information on SSSQAF can be found at the following link: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/quality-assurance/sssqafsubcommittee>
- 1.4 The Review adopted a methodology similar to an internal review of a subject area and consisted of the following University remit items:
- Effectiveness of the management of the student support experience
  - Effectiveness of the management of quality and standards
  - Effectiveness of the management of enhancement and promotion of good practice

It also included service specific remit items as agreed by services at the remit schedule meeting:

- Links, liaison and communication between support services and academic areas
- How do we support staff who support students

1.5 The Review Team was made up of internal members, student members and external members:

- Professor Allan Cumming, Dean of Student, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (Convener)
- Mark Ames, Director of Student Services, University of Bristol (External Member)
- Sam Dale, Deputy Academic Registrar, Durham University (External Member)
- Dr Lisa Kendall, Director of Professional Services, Edinburgh Law School (Internal Member)
- Mark Wilkinson, Student Experience Project Manager (Internal Member)
- Professor Judy Hardy, Director of Teaching, School of Physics and Astronomy (Internal Member)
- Dr Sheila Lodge, Head of Academic Administration, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (Internal Member)
- Andy Peel, Vice President Societies and Activities, Edinburgh University Students Association (EUSA) (Student Member)
- Jess Killeen, Third year student of Sociology and Politics, Elected representative for the Disabilities and Mental Wellbeing Group (Student Member)

- Anne Marie O’Mullane, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services (Thematic Review Administrator)

- 1.5 An analytical report was produced by relevant support services, academic areas and EUSA Advice Place. An introduction was provided by Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience. This report was used by the Review Team to shape the review schedule and the focus of meetings. Supplementary information was also supplied to the Review Team in advance of the review. Two reports *Student Mental Wellbeing in Higher Education Good Practice Guide* (Universities UK (UUK), 2015) and *Mental Health of Students in Higher Education* (Royal College of Psychiatry (RCP), 2011) were used as benchmarks for best practice.
- 1.6 Pre-review meetings took place with Dr Sharon Young, a GP from the University Health Centre and Dr Robby Steel, the CMVM Psychiatric Advisor in order to gather views on how the University links and liaises with sector bodies and the NHS.
- 1.7 The review visit took place on the 15 and 16 March 2016 and consisted of meetings with staff from services, staff who are involved in the development of relevant strategy, staff who engage with services, student users of services and those engaged in student society activity. See Appendix A for the Review Schedule.
- 1.8 At the end of the review visit, the review team identified the key commendations and recommendations. These were then presented to representatives from the review areas. The Thematic Review Administrator produced the report with input from the Review Team.

## 2. About this Report

- 2.1 This report will set out an overall finding and follow the structure of the university remit items to set out commendations and recommendations for the University’s consideration.
- 2.2 This report adopts the terminology used in the UUK report (2015):

*Mental health encompasses the emotional resilience that enables us to enjoy life and to survive pain, disappointment and sadness, and underlying belief in our own, and others’ dignity and worth. It also allows us to engage productively in and contribute to society or our community.*

*A positive sense of mental wellbeing is for all of us to consider all the time, as we might consider our physical, social and spiritual wellbeing. It is quite possible to have a good sense of mental wellbeing and yet be living with a diagnosed mental illness.*

*Mental health difficulties, often following major life events such as the end of relationship, close bereavement or leaving home, can impact significantly on how students feel about themselves and how they engage with the transitions of student life. Symptoms may beset anyone at any time, giving rise to ongoing conditions that could interfere with the student’s university experience and have implications for academic study.*

*Mental illness – arising from organic, genetic, psychological or behavioural factors (or combinations of these) that occur in an individual and are not understood or expected as part of normal development or culture – can be acute or chronic, and may fall within the definition of a ‘disability’ contained in the Equality Act 2010. It is important for institutions to bear in mind,*

*however, that not all mental health difficulties will constitute a 'disability' under the Equality Act.*

### 3. Review Findings

- 3.1 The UUK Report (2015) states: “The task for institutions is to help students to capitalise on the positive mental health benefits of higher education while identifying and providing appropriate support to those who are more vulnerable to its pressures”. Taking into consideration this definition of the role of institutions, the Review Team has **confidence** that the University delivers effective mental health and well-being services. These services are delivered by both student support services with a dedicated remit in the area of mental health and well-being and services which deliver this activity as a sub-set of their broader range of services.

### 4. Institutional Context

- 4.1 The Analytical Report states:

*An alternative and perhaps more helpful model than the traditional organisation chart is to conceive of the University's support for student mental health and wellbeing as a system that combines specialist interventions by trained staff with more generalised support from a wide range of staff and specific initiatives to promote general wellbeing and mental health.*

The University considers that the Student Disability Services and Student Counselling Services are core services that provide specialist interventions to students with mental illness and mental health difficulties. Within the University, the following areas provide key support to students who are encountering mental health difficulties:

- Student Disability Service
- Student Counselling Service
- Chaplaincy
- Accommodation Services – Residence Life
- Centre for Sports and Exercise – Healthy University Project
- Schools – For example, Personal Tutors, Senior Tutors and Student Support Officers
- International Student Advisory Service

These areas are a network and act together as needed to support individual students and mental wellbeing in the student population.

- 4.2 Student Disability Service, Student Counselling Service and Chaplaincy are part of Student Experience Services, reporting to the Deputy Secretary, Student Experience as part of the University Secretary's Group. International Student Advisory Service is part of the International Office and is a member of the University Secretary's Group. Accommodation Services and Centre for Sports and Exercise are business units in the Corporate Services Group. EUSA's Advice Place provides advice and support to students and is an important link and liaison with Student Disability Service and Student Counselling Service. EUSA Advice Place is also perceived to form part of the network of services.

- 4.3 Outwith the University, students may also receive support through their GP or wider NHS services. While the Student Counselling Service has close links with the University Health Centre (UHC), the UHC is an independent GP practice.
- 4.4 The Personal Tutor (PT) system was introduced by the University for all undergraduate students during 2012-13 academic year. This was extended to postgraduate taught students during 2013 - 14. The main driver behind the introduction of the PT system across the University was the need to address a general sense of disconnection between students and the institution. It was envisioned that the PT would provide their tutees with an approachable and friendly contact to help ease the transition to University life and foster a sense of belonging and academic community. The system ensures that every student has a PT (a member of the academic staff in their area) providing them with a first-point-of-contact for academic guidance and support during their time at the University. Each School also has a Student Support Team (SST) to provide PTs with administrative support and help students with information and guidance on routine queries.
- 4.5 Each School has a Personal Tutoring Statement which explains to students and staff how the PT system operates within the specific pedagogical context of their disciplinary area. Personal Tutoring Statements are tailored to allow each School to address the needs of their subjects, programme structures and professional requirements within the University's framework for student support. The School Personal Tutoring Statements function as a reference point, enabling the School to establish the purpose and timing of scheduled PT meetings and providing students with key contacts, such as the Student Support Team.
- 4.6 Mental Health difficulties can be severely disruptive to a student's capacity to study and learn. Often it is the PT or Student Support Officer (SSO) who encounters students who disclose that they are having mental health difficulties and are seeking information on how to access support so that they can continue effectively with their studies. In these circumstances, it is the responsibility of the PT or Student Support Team to sign post or refer to the support services that the University offers.
- 4.7 For postgraduate research students, the supervisory team should contain at least two members, a Principal Supervisor (in some cases referred to as the Lead Supervisor) and Co-supervisor or Assistant Supervisor depending on the supervision model. The supervisory team supports the student's candidature. The Principal Supervisor is responsible for providing help and advice to the student on:
- Research training
  - Choice of topic
  - Organising the research
  - Identifying any specific training needs
  - Feedback on written work and any other component of the research
  - Pastoral support

Like the PT or SSO the Principal Supervisor has a referral or sign-posting role where a student indicates they are encountering mental health difficulties.

## 5. Mental Health and Wellbeing service provision

### 5.1 Student Counselling Service

Student Counselling Service's (SCS) primary purpose is to provide where needed a free confidential professional counselling to all matriculated students of the University of Edinburgh. The counselling offered by the Service is short-term of up to six sessions, subject to clinical need, and is provided by a team of experienced professionally-qualified counsellors and psychotherapists. Students self-refer and the Service has an online referral system. Counsellors provide a range of therapeutic modalities including CBT, email counselling, hypnotherapy and Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing.

5.2 Since 2014, a Student Mental Health Coordinator (SMHC) has been part of SCS. This role has three core purposes:

- To provide a mental health assessment and offer short term support to students presenting with acute, complex or enduring mental health problems (with some provision for out of hours site visits to schools and University-maintained accommodation as required)
- To refer students for appropriate interventions within University support services or external e.g. with GPs, Mental Health Assessment Service (Royal Edinburgh Hospital); to liaise and coordinate support for students as appropriate
- To contribute to training and policy development on student mental health

5.3 The secondary objective of SCS is to enhance and encourage the emotional wellbeing and mental health of students and those who support them. Examples of activities include:

- Facilitating a range of psycho-educational group activities, workshops and presentations
- Encouraging appropriate self-help for students
- Offering advice and support to student support teams concerned for the mental and emotional wellbeing of their students
- Contributing to training and development programmes organised for staff and students by Schools and other departments of the University

5.4 A wide range of self-help materials are available on SCS's webpages. The service provided is not an emergency service, but the model of delivery deals effectively with crisis intervention. Students identified by the triage approach as being at risk are given priority for appointments. The Duty Manager system, with one of the clinical management team on duty each day, and the work of the SMHC mean that students arriving in distress at SCS can be seen quickly.

### 5.5 Student Disability Service

The Student Disability Service (SDS) offers all disabled students, dependent on assessed need, access to learning support as detailed in a student's Learning Profile. This includes those with a disclosed chronic and long standing mental health illness. A Learning Profile is a list of reasonable adjustments/support, which the University should implement to ensure that access to learning and teaching for disabled students is equitable to that for all other students. The support listed in the Learning Profile is recommended by SDS Disability Advisors and formulated in discussion with the student.

5.6 Depending on assessed need, a student may require an additional 1:1 non-medical helper or other funded support. This could include support from one of the service's Mental Health Mentors. This support is recommended by the Disability Advisors. For UK students it is funded via the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). For International students it is supported by an internal SDS/University fund - the Disabled Students' Support Fund. The Mental Health Mentors provide a combination of emotional and study skills support for varying lengths of time, dependent on need, to students whose mental ill health defines them as disabled.

### 5.7 **Chaplaincy**

The Chaplaincy supports student and staff of all faiths and none. In relation to mental health provision, the Chaplaincy provides a listening service, bereavement care and emergency response, practices for mental and spiritual wellbeing, training for students and staff in mindfulness, courses for reflection on existential matters, calm, reflective and safe spaces at the Chaplaincy Centre and King's Buildings, and Sanctuary and Labyrinth space in sites across the University.

5.8 The listening service is provided for students and staff, including staff seeking support in their support of students. A Chaplain may be available immediately, or will respond within 24 hours to a request to meet a Chaplain.

5.9 Practices for mental and spiritual wellbeing include mindfulness provision, open air and nature activities, prayer and religious service provision. Chaplaincy provides pilgrimage and retreat opportunities which promote reflection and assist with the fostering of good relations and tolerant and compassionate attitudes. The Chaplaincy runs courses for reflection on existential matters including "Spiritual Conversation" on living and dying, which has been described by attendees as helping alongside or as an extension of bereavement counselling. The "What's the University For" (WUF) Series retains a focus on the wellbeing of the University. WUF is evolving conversations in 2016 on the "Compassionate University".

### 5.10 **Advice Place**

The Advice Place offers free and impartial advice to all students at the University of Edinburgh. Advice is offered in two main themes, welfare and academic. Welfare advisers support students who are in financial distress, offering practical support with applications for funding and emergency loans, referral to expert debt services as well as sign posting for counselling services. Academic Advisers support students through special circumstances submissions, appeals and academic complaints as well as discipline and Support for Study procedures and interruptions of study.

5.11 As an external support service, the Advice Place is uniquely placed to help students navigate the system and processes in order to be able to access support for their needs. As a service, it strives to empower students to act for themselves in university matters but frequently advisers step in and offer long term or temporary intensive support for those whom the service judges to be vulnerable.

### 5.12 **Accommodation Services – Residence Life**

The core activity of Accommodation Services is to offer a range of accommodation to students primarily in their first year of study. One of the business areas in the Accommodation Services is Residence Life. The role of this team is to provide an inclusive and supportive community for residents. The team provides a range of events and activities for residents which offers the chance to meet others, form their own friendship groups and embrace the many opportunities that the University, the city and Scotland have to offer. There is also a member of the Residence Life team

available to assist with student concerns/issues. The majority of residence life staff are “live in” and therefore live and work with the student cohort for which they are responsible.

#### 5.13 Residence Life staff consist of:

- Wardens responsible for pastoral care, discipline and line management of Resident Assistants
- Resident Assistants
- Residence Life Coordinators
- Assistant Director

Staff most likely to engage with a student encountering mental health difficulties are domestic staff, security staff or Residence Life staff. A procedure for response to a welfare concern is followed where a concern is raised. The Residence Life team’s role is to be the first point of contact, assist with the immediate issue whatever that may be, signpost to the appropriate support and to maintain contact with all concerned.

#### 5.14 **University Sports and Exercise**

The University’s sports and exercise offer is delivered jointly by the University Sports and Exercise and Edinburgh University Sports Union. Together they provide an array of high quality, affordable and relevant services. Students can avail of opportunities to use physical activity and sport as a means of promoting positive mental health.

#### 5.15 University Sports & Exercise delivers the following:

- 64 sports clubs – approximately 7000 students are members
- Gym access (12500 student members) and exercise classes (60+classes a week)
- Recreational sports opportunities at Firbush Outdoor Centre, Peffermill (pitches), St Leonards (swimming and indoor sport) and Pleasance (climbing, archery, squash, court sports and more besides)
- Stress buster sessions before and after exam diets to provide physical activity opportunities to reduce anxiety levels among students – promoted and delivered jointly by EUSA, Edinburgh University Sports Union (EUSU) and University Sport & Exercise
- Campaigns where EUSA, EUSU and University Sport & Exercise collaborate on matters to highlight mental health directly, for example, Mental Health and Well Being week
- Support for Physical Activity Programme – supports inactive students to achieve at least the minimum health guidelines for physical activity through a 10 week programme of motivational interviewing and goal setting. This programme is an element of the Healthy University Project strand of the Student Experience Project and has funding until December 2016.

The provision for sports and fitness is 7 days per week (89 hours per week) including staying open during University vacation periods.

#### 5.16 **International Student Advisory Service**

The International Student Advice Service, part of the International Office provides advice on immigration, visa extensions, working in the UK during and post study and other matters. The Service provides support and guidance for moving to the UK, adjusting to the culture, getting settled, and events and activities for international students and their families.

- 5.17 Members of the Service team refer distressed students to the Counselling Service as required. The Service also provides support during critical incidents with mental health support delivered by professional external services. Here the service will liaise with personal tutors, Residence Life and Accommodation Services. The service will also liaise with NHS, family or supporters, financial or government sponsors and undertake visitation at hospitals, as required.
- 5.18 Post-incident practical assistance can involve providing evidence of student status to the NHS overseas charging unit to alleviate claims for payment for treatment, arranging documents from the University for the student, liaising with Accommodation Services to arrange packing up a person's belongings, assisting with requests for fee refunds, liaison with Embassy or other similar contacts and where required, discussing return to study in relation to immigration status with both the individual concerned and other service departments.

## 6. Effectiveness of the management of the student support experience

### 6.1 Governance of Mental Health and Wellbeing Services

The Review Team agreed with the reflective analysis that there are weaknesses with governance arrangements of mental health and wellbeing services. Each individual service is well run and well managed but the lack of a formal governance structure and strategy is resulting in a reactive and resource intensive approach that cannot be sustained.

- 6.2 Currently there are a number of bodies that are involved in governance of this area. There is a Mental Health Sub-Group, a sub-committee of the Student Disability Committee, which reports to Quality Assurance Committee (QAC). QAC receives a report from individual support services as part of SSSQAF. The Student Mental Health Strategy Group (SMHSG) was set up in 2014-15 in response to increasing concerns that the volume of students presenting with mental health issues was putting many parts of the network of services under strain and that a more formalised approach to managing demand and supporting wellbeing was required. Strands of the group's work included governance and strategy. The Review Team noted that the SMHSG's original recommendations in relation to governance have been taken over by recent events following the disbandment of the Equality and Diversity Committee.

- 6.3 The Review Team **recommends** that the governance of mental health services and strategy be incorporated into the Learning and Teaching governance framework. Future governance arrangements need to ensure that mental health services are considered at an appropriately high level of University committee. This should be implemented as quickly as possible.

### 6.4 Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Review Team recognises that strategic planning is very important, particularly as demand on services continues to rise from year to year. The University will need to be clear about where to invest and what to prioritise in terms of allocation of resources. The SMHSG's primary purpose is to deliver a mental health strategy. The Review Team noted that elements of the strategy will cover:

- Promotion of mental wellbeing amongst the student community
- Delivery of appropriate, high quality, accessible and equitable support services for students with mental health issues, in order to support them with their academic goals

- Training, development and support staff (in particular non-specialist staff) who in turn support students with mental health issues
- Gathering and use data on student mental health issues to inform future service development
- Responding appropriately to student mental health crisis situations
- Maintaining an appropriate range of policies in this area, considering in particular the on-going need and further development of the Support for Study Policy

6.5 The Review Team is aware that the Strategy Group were awaiting the outcome of this review before finalising the Mental Health Strategy. It is hoped that the contents of this report will help facilitate its development. The Review Team note however that the timelines for outcomes suggested in the review documentation were not clear. Continued work is required to create a formal strategy and agree how the strategy will be effectively operationalised. There will need to be a mechanism to ensure that the existing quality assurance process for these services links directly with the governance and strategy development and review.

6.6 The Review Team **commends** the progress to date in developing a range of approaches to student wellbeing, including the resources developed to encourage self-management of wellbeing. Self-help, peer support and the promotion of health and wellbeing are clearly receiving high prominence. For example, there are activities delivered by Student Counselling, mindfulness sessions run by Chaplaincy, sports activities being delivered in conjunction with the Centre for Sports and Exercise, EUSU and the Healthy University Project, community building activities being delivered by Residence Life and the Peer Support Project. The Review Team also recognise that part of the strategy will need to focus on cross-organisational marketing, promotion, and advertising of activity as it was evident that much activity on promoting wellbeing is being undertaken but it was not evident that communication is effective.

6.7 The most common issues presented by students assessed by SCS remain consistent: anxiety, depression, academic issues, relationship problems and issues around self and identity. The Review Team recognises that there is a need to scale up activities to develop and sustain student wellbeing and resilience and **recommends** that the University, EUSA and the Sports Union continue to develop the strategic approach to this activity in a coordinated and joined up manner. The best balance between promoting wellbeing and responding to student mental ill-health needs to be further considered through the development of the planned strategy and the desired impact of investment articulated and agreed.

6.8 The Review Team **recommends** that the University considers taking a “healthy settings” approach ([www.who.int/healthy\\_settings/en](http://www.who.int/healthy_settings/en)) to the way it conducts its business to support staff and student wellbeing. It will be helpful to reflect on this model when developing the Mental Health Strategy. Further information about the Healthy Universities approach is available at the following link: <http://www.healthyuniversities.ac.uk/>.

## 6.9 Policies

### Support for Study Policy

In 2015 the SMHSG recommended a Support for Study Policy to Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC). CSPC approved the policy which provides a supportive way of assisting the small number of students whose behaviour gives cause for concern. It offers an alternative to disciplinary action when a student's behaviour may be affected by health conditions or impairments. The Review Team heard feedback from staff on how the policy was working so far. The Review Team **recommends** that the Support for Study Policy is reviewed, as the current Policy lacks the option to require students to interrupt their studies where the Support for Study Panel deems it appropriate. Currently this scenario requires the case to be managed under student disciplinary regulations. Dealing with such cases fully within the Support for Study Policy would be more appropriate and in line with the intention to support students who are unwell, rather than to act in a punitive way. It is also important to identify the University's responsibilities and develop a consistent approach to supporting students' return to study when appropriate.

#### 6.10 Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy

The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy seeks to increase the accessibility and inclusivity of learning and teaching for all students by mainstreaming certain adjustments. The Review Team heard from students about the uneven implementation of the mainstreamed adjustments. The Review Team **recommends** that Learning and Teaching Committee ensure that the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy is appropriately implemented and embedded. The risk associated with a failure to implement the Accessible and Inclusive Learning policy must be appropriately managed. A strategic approach should be developed including ownership of risk (primarily the potential breach of the University's duties, including our "anticipatory duty", as defined by the Equality Act and the Public Sector Duty) which is accepted and understood at School level.

#### 6.11 **Reasonable Adjustments**

While the Review Group recognises that reasonable adjustments go beyond those implemented for mental health and can be used for a range of medical conditions and impairments, the Review Team heard evidence that students have not always been given a good rationale for lack of implementation of a reasonable adjustment. The Review Team **recommends** that a risk assessment be undertaken of the impact of a failure to deliver reasonable adjustments for disabled students (including mainstreamed adjustments) in line with the provisions of the legislation.

## 7. Effectiveness of the management of quality and standards

7.1 Clear routes of support, ease of access and appropriate adjustments to the learning and living environment are key positive enablers for students. These aspects were highlighted over the course of the review as areas both for commendation and where further work needs to be focussed. The Review Team heard that the current quality assurance process is sufficiently robust. However, the outcomes of the review are not widely known beyond the specific sub-committee, SSSQAF and its parent committee QAC. Consideration should be given on how to communicate the outcomes of the quality assurance process to users and staff who provide support to students. The Review Team also recognised that there will need to be a mechanism to ensure that the existing quality assurance process for services links directly with governance structures and strategy development. One area for consideration as part of strategy development will be identifying which data sets and KPIs are of value to the University in measuring genuine outcomes, satisfaction and in assisting with planning.

#### 7.2 **Support across services for student mental health and wellbeing**

The Review Team **commends** those services who deliver mental health services as a core part or as a subset of their remit. The Review Team heard excellent feedback from students and staff. As the reflective analysis notes, the University is facing rapidly growing demand for support from students experiencing mental health issues. The issue of growing demand has created particular pressures for the SCS and the SDS but the impact is noticeable across all areas of the review. The Review Team believe that the Services will be able to withstand these increased pressures where there is robust governance, strategy and effective quality assurance.

### 7.3 Student Counselling Service

The SCS has experienced year-on-year growth in demand over the past five years of 114%. In 2015-16, the SCS is experiencing an additional 50% increase in referrals over 2014-15. The Review Team observed that there are unrealistic expectations of what the SCS can and should be doing both internally and externally. Waiting times for counselling are perceived to be an issue by both staff and students. The Review Team believe this reflects a lack of understanding of the role and purpose of SCS, which is not set up to provide a crisis service. The Review Team **recommends** that efforts to raise awareness of the purpose of SCS among staff and students are continued. The Review Team recognises a risk that the SCS is regarded by relevant NHS providers as a necessary “gateway” to NHS services, which places undue pressure on SCS. The structure of the academic year can impact on students’ ability to access NHS services; unless they are referred at the beginning of the academic year, long waiting times can result in a student not being seen before the end of the academic year. It is not appropriate for the SCS to replace or replicate the services of the NHS. The Review Team note that the role of SMHC is essential to ensuring that the SCS is not expected to fill gaps in NHS mental health provision.

### 7.5 Student Disability Service

In academic year 2014/15, 495 disabled students disclosed a mental health condition at the point of application. This is in the context of year on year growth in disclosure numbers, with 52% growth in disability disclosure in the last 5 years. A significant number of these students experience mental health impairments alongside other conditions such as dyslexia and Asperger’s Syndrome. The number of disclosures of mental health conditions have increased by 140% over the last five years. This statistic does not take into account students who disclose their disability under a different category, defined by the University as “unseen, multiple or not listed”. The Review Team **commends** the Mental Health Mentors provision. Students have given feedback that this service is excellent and, in some cases, transformative. The Review Team suggest that this service be expanded as resources allow and that information about this provision be more readily available to those supporting students.

### 7.6 Residence Life

The Review Team **commends** the work of Residence Life in promoting community building. It is **recommended** however, that Residence Life revisit the monitoring process to ensure that the relevant provision is being delivered consistently across all sites. The Review Team heard feedback from students that the Resident Assistant role is not working optimally in some cases, when they are unable to provide appropriate support for a student experiencing mental health difficulties.

### 7.7 Support for a diverse student body

The UUK Report (2015) notes that “Ensuring continuity of support can be particularly challenging for students who are required to spend part of their course on professional placements, working in

industry or studying or working abroad. Services accessible to these students can be very different from those available at the home institution or through the NHS or voluntary sectors”.

- 7.8 The Review Team suggest that the University should examine how robust its approach is in support of study abroad or study 'away' students. This matter had been raised during discussions with School staff.
- 7.9 The Review Team heard from the University Health Centre and UoE colleagues about the difficulty of engaging some international students in thinking about their mental health and supporting them effectively. The University should also ensure that all categories of student, and in particular international students, are consulted on service models and ease of access to services.
- 7.10 The Review Team **commends** SCS for the support they provide to online distance learning students. The Review Team heard excellent feedback about email counselling and the self-help material provided by the service.
- 7.11 The Review Team **recommends** that consideration be given to introducing a programme to help students who live at home or commute to manage the transition to university, perhaps using the current Residence Life programme as a model. The Review Team recognises that building an effective and cohesive learning community is an important aspect of students' transition to University, and that isolation can be detrimental to mental health and wellbeing.
- 7.12 The Review Team met with staff who were supervisors to PhD students and those who worked to support Postgraduate Research administration. The Review Team noted that the relationship between supervisor and student can be very close and it can be difficult for a supervisor to step back and remain detached. In this context, it would be helpful to have guidance and training for supervisors. The matter of postgraduate research students who are also staff and who experience mental health difficulties was raised as an issue as there is a lack of clarity on what processes should be followed; Human Resources policies or student-related policies.

## 8. Effectiveness of the management of enhancement and promotion of good practice

### 8.1 Student led-initiatives

The UUK Report (2015) notes a growth in the number and range of initiatives that are either student-led or developed with students. This reflects the increasing emphasis that students and student bodies place on mental health and wellbeing, as well as recognising the increased demand for mental health support. The Review Team noted that student-led initiatives have been a high priority for EUSA this year. The creation of a Health and Wellbeing Fund, with funding from both EUSA and the University, through the Student Experience Project, has led to a number of worthwhile initiatives receiving funding in the current academic year. A Mental Health Awareness week was delivered jointly by EUSA, EUSU and the University in February 2016. The Review Team **commends** the creation of EUSA's Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, in collaboration with the University which aims to support student initiatives and broader campaigns around student wellbeing. The Review Team heard positive feedback on student take-up on initiatives run during the Mental Health Awareness Week. The University should continue to work with EUSA and EUSU as key partners, and make additional effort to encourage and sustain the work of student led groups.

8.2 The Review Team learnt of the recent creation of a number of societies in 2015 in the area of mental health and wellbeing and the activities that the societies have been undertaking. The Review Team **commends** the work of student societies in the area of mental health and wellbeing, particularly the Mental Health and Wellbeing Society. The Review Team recognises that these societies have a reach to the student population that formal frameworks and services may not possess and efforts should be made to support their long term sustainability.

### 8.3 **Accessing Information and support**

The Review Team **recommends** that the mental health services consider - what are the perceived barriers to students accessing services? Having identified these, consideration should be given to ways in which these barriers can be mitigated or removed. The challenge remains to balance the delivery of excellent services to students and efforts to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, with efforts to help staff and students understand that universities are primarily academic rather than therapeutic communities. The Review Team identified a number of perceived barriers. Some students identified that they would not access the Disability Service since they did not perceive themselves as disabled. This is problematic if applicants and new students are choosing not to seek support in the context of a mental illness. We noted that this can have a significant impact on their experience and ability to fulfil their academic potential. This issue was particularly highlighted in relation to accessing the support of Mental Health mentors, a service which was reported as being particularly impactful.

8.4 The Review Team recognises that excellent information is available on the thematic section of the website under the section "Things going wrong". The Review Team **recommends** consideration be given to the routes provided to information online for both staff and students. The search engine is not prioritising this section of the website, it is displaying the many different sections of the University that offer advice in relation to mental health and wellbeing. The Review Team suggests that staff and students are asked to test the routes in the relevant section of the thematic website and that the University teams responsible for the web site explore ways to optimise web searches for mental health related information so that it is more readily available to staff and students.

### 8.5 **Links, Liaison and Communication**

Both the RCP (2011) and UUK Report (2015) stress the important of strong links between the relevant University services and external/NHS provision. Evidence presented to the 2016 SSSQAF meeting by the senior GP at the University Health Centre confirms excellent two-way links between the Health Centre and the Student Counselling Service in particular. The recruitment of the Student Mental Health Coordinator in SCS has strengthened links with NHS services including the Royal Edinburgh Hospital and Mental Health Assessment services. The Review Team are concerned about how embedded and resilient these connections are should the current Student Mental Health Coordinator be unavailable.

8.6 Acute and crisis situations are a particular challenge. The Review Team heard evidence from Schools that these are linked with high levels of anxiety amongst staff who provide support for students. The University services are not health care providers and the SCS is clear on the limitations of the service it can provide. It is apparent from the discussions with external contacts that there is also a worrying lack of resource to support mental health crises and acute care in the NHS Lothian region. The University should endeavour to establish a formal link with relevant NHS services, perhaps jointly with other HEIs, in order to influence strategic planning, assess anticipated service demand and to ensure that NHS services can meet the particular challenges of the academic timetable. The Review

Team urges MHSG to consider how to improve links and facilitate connections between relevant NHS services and the University, and perhaps the wider HE sector, in Edinburgh.

- 8.7 Informal networks and sharing of skills and knowledge to build communities of practice is very important in a large University such as Edinburgh. Within the University we heard evidence from service providers that they believed the internal connections to be in place and that they were resilient. When challenged it was clear that these were led by specific individuals across the service providers. The Review Team heard a number of comments about lack of connections between the service providers and academic Schools. The Review Team **recommends** further investigation of how links between services and Schools can be improved. There should be a robust structure to support the links between Schools and services. This could be through Senior Tutors and other student support staff, with nominated contact points for each service.
- 8.8 Staff also highlighted the value and importance of access to networks for “de-brief”, staff-staff support and general information and sharing of experience. In the same way that we are finding ways to share examples of good practice in teaching, it would help if the University could provide a mechanism/platform to allow sharing of good practice in support for mental health issues. This should be done through the Personal Tutor/SSO networks, but also more widely so that new health and wellbeing projects can be publicised alongside other initiatives that have clearly benefitted students and staff.
- 8.9 The Review Team heard from staff that there is a lack of clarity regarding what information can and should be shared between the services and the Schools. Some staff have indicated that they are not confident on the circumstances in which they should or should not disclose information. Students with mental health difficulties may be particularly susceptible to “dropping off the radar” if services do not have effective and consistent ways of sharing information. The Review Team **recommends** that Records Management review the document ‘Guidelines on the Disclosure of Information about Students’ to ensure that it is fit for purpose and accessible for students and staff involved in their support.

#### 8.9 Supporting Staff who support Students

The UUK Report (2015) report notes that “If staff are to be effective in recognising guiding and supporting students with complex difficulties or ill health they need to have the personal robustness and appropriate institutional guidance and support to help them to undertake their role”. The Review teams **commends** the Helping Distressed Students Guide. This was cited by many staff as being a useful tool for supporting students who are distressed. However, the Review Team heard from some staff of their lack of confidence in dealing with students in distress. The Review Team also heard of variable quality and consistency of support across Schools for students with mental health difficulties.

- 8.10 Staff development is central to the whole institution’s ability to deliver a mental health strategy and should be a central objective within it. The Review Team was updated on plans to offer training for every Personal Tutor within the next two to three years. The Review Team **commends** the ambitious plan for training of Personal Tutors. There lacked unanimity from the Review Team on this commendation as a minority expressed concern with the feasibility of delivering this plan in its current state. The Review Team recognises the need for a broader piece of work on workload modelling, reward and recognition in relation to the role of Personal Tutor. The Review Team understands the difficulties of making such training mandatory and has not made a recommendation to do so. However, the Review Team shares the Assistant Principal Academic Support’s view that

training that is designed to be area specific and carefully developed for the audience will be perceived through word of mouth as being worthwhile to attend. The Review Team encourages roll-out of this training programme as soon as possible. The Review Team recognises there is a risk that members of Student Support Teams may feel undervalued from lack of inclusion in the current training plan. Members of Student Support Teams have raised the need for training in this area, and the Team advises that this be considered as soon as possible. Careful attention must also be given to the expectations of different roles and grades of staff.

- 8.12 The Review Team **recommends** having a higher level of training for certain individuals in each School, recognising that some Schools may need to pool resources, so that these people could support and advise colleagues dealing with particularly complex or difficult situations. These individuals may have a specific link with central services. This type of training would need to be carefully researched and might vary from School to School given the regular changeover in office bearers in certain Schools and the appropriate responsibilities for the grade.
- 8.13 The Review Team is aware that there a number of training programmes in existence already and **recommends** that an audit of all programmes should be undertaken in order to avoid further confusion and streamline time and resource both from those involved in delivering training and those seeking training.

## 9. List of Commendations

No	Commendation
1.	The Review Team <b>commends</b> the progress to date in developing a range of approaches to student wellbeing, including the resources developed to encourage self-management of wellbeing. Self-help, peer support and the promotion of health and wellbeing are clearly receiving high prominence.
2.	The Review Team <b>commends</b> those services who deliver mental health services as a core part or as a subset of their remit. The Review Team heard excellent feedback from students and staff.
3.	The Review Team <b>commends</b> the Mental Health Mentors provision. Students have given feedback that this service is excellent and, in some cases, transformative.
4.	The Review Team <b>commends</b> the work of Residence Life in promoting community building.
5.	The Review Team <b>commends</b> SCS for the support they provide to online distance learning students. The Review Team heard excellent feedback about email counselling and the self-help material provided by the service.
6.	The Review Team <b>commends</b> the creation of EUSA's Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, in collaboration with the University which aims to support student initiatives and broader campaigns around student wellbeing.
7.	The Review Team <b>commends</b> the work of student societies in the area of mental health and wellbeing, particularly the Mental Health and Wellbeing Society.
8.	The Review teams <b>commends</b> the Helping Distressed Students guide.
9.	The Review Team <b>commends</b> the ambitious plan for training of Personal Tutors. The Review Team recognises the need for broader piece of work on workload modelling, reward and recognition in relation to the role of personal tutor. The Review Team recognises there is a risk that members of Student Support Teams may feel undervalued from lack of inclusion in the current training plan.

## 10. List of Recommendations

No.	Recommendation	Responsible
1.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> that the governance of mental health services and strategy be incorporated into the Learning and Teaching governance framework. Future governance arrangements need to ensure that mental health services are considered at an appropriately high level of University committee. This should be implemented as quickly as possible.	Mental Health Strategy Group
2.	The Review Team recognise that there is a need to scale up activities to develop and sustain student wellbeing and resilience and <b>recommends</b> that the University, EUSA and the Sports Union continue to develop the strategic approach to this activity in a coordinated and joined up manner.	Mental Health Strategy Group
3.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> that the University considers taking a “healthy settings” approach ( <a href="http://www.who.int/healthy_settings/en">www.who.int/healthy_settings/en</a> ) to the way it conducts business to support staff and student wellbeing. It will be helpful to reflect on this model when developing the Mental Health Strategy.	Mental Health Strategy Group
4.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> that the Support for Study Policy is reviewed, as the current Policy lacks the option to require students to interrupt their studies where the Support for Study Panel deems it appropriate.	Curriculum and Student Progression Committee
5.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> that Learning and Teaching Committee ensure that the Accessible and Inclusive Learning policy is appropriately implemented and embedded.	Learning and Teaching Committee
6.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> that a risk assessment be undertaken of the impact of a failure to deliver reasonable adjustments for disabled students (including mainstreamed adjustments).	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
7.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> that efforts to raise awareness of the purpose of SCS among staff and students are continued.	Student Counselling Service
8.	It is <b>recommended</b> that Residence Life revisit the monitoring process to ensure that the relevant provision is being delivered consistently across all sites.	Accommodation Services
9.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> that consideration be given to introducing a programme to help students who live at home or commute to manage the transition to university, perhaps using the current Residence Life programme as a model.	Mental Health Strategy Group

10.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> that mental health services consider - what are the perceived barriers to students accessing services? Having identified these, consideration should be given to ways in which these barriers can be mitigated or removed.	Student Counselling Service, Student Disability Service
11.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> consideration be given to the routes provided to information online for both staff and students. The Review Team suggests that staff and students are asked to test the routes in the relevant section of the thematic website and explore ways to prioritise this information.	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
12.	The Review <b>recommends</b> further investigation of how links between services and schools can be improved. There should be a robust structure to support the links between schools and services which may be through student support staff or through the Senior Tutors and nominated contact points for each service.	Mental Health Strategy Group
13.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> that Records Management review the document 'Guidelines on the Disclosure of Information about Students' to ensure that it is fit for purpose and accessible for students and staff involved in their support.	Records Management Team/Student Disability Service and Student Counselling Service
14.	The Review Team <b>recommends</b> having a higher level of training for certain individuals in each School, recognising that some Schools may need to pool resources, so that these people could support and advise colleagues dealing with complex or difficult situations.	Assistant Principal, Academic Support
15.	The Review Team is aware that there a number of training programmes in existence already and <b>recommends</b> that an audit of all programmes should be undertaken in order to avoid further confusion and streamline time and resource both from those involved in delivering training and those seeking training.	Mental Health Strategy Group

## 11. Appendix One – Review Schedule

The University of Edinburgh

Thematic Review: Visit Schedule

Thematic Review of Mental Health Services

15 and 16 March 2016, Elder Room, Old College

### Prior to the Review

Session	Meeting details	Purpose	Attendees	Meeting Chair
<b>Pre-review meeting 1</b>	11.30am on 14 March  Registry Foyer Room	<b>Input from health care professionals on their perspectives of the University's mental health services</b>  Meeting with Dr Robby Steel, CMVM Psychiatric Advisor.  To discuss:  • Views on how the University links and liaises with sector bodies and the NHS	Dr Robby Steele, CMVM Psychiatric Advisor  Members of the Review Team:  Professor Allan Cumming  Dr Lisa Kendall  Andy Peel  Anne Marie O'Mullane (notes)	Professor Allan Cumming
<b>Pre-review meeting 2</b>	15.00 on 14 March  Registry Foyer Room	<b>Input from health care professionals on their perspectives of the University's mental health services</b>  Meeting with Dr Sharon Young, University Health Centre. Dr Sharon Young will canvas the views of colleagues.  To discuss:  • Views on how the University links and liaises with sector bodies and the NHS	Dr Sharon Young, University Health Centre  Members of the Review Team:  Professor Allan Cumming Dr Lisa Kendall  Anne Marie O'Mullane (notes)	Professor Allan Cumming

**Day One**

<b>Session</b>	<b>Meeting details</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Attendees (title &amp; role)</b>	<b>Meeting Chair</b>
<b>1.1</b>	09.00-09.30  Venue: Elder Room	<b>Review Team Meeting</b>  To confirm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the format of the review</li> <li>• chair of each meeting</li> <li>• lines of enquiry</li> <li>• highlight any points/themes to be pursued</li> <li>• any relevant issues</li> <li>• update from pre-meeting</li> </ul>	Review Team	Professor Allan Cumming
<b>1.2</b>	09.30 – 11.00  Venue: Elder Room	<b>Understanding the landscape of Mental Health Services at the University of Edinburgh</b>  To discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• governance and management of the services</li> <li>• coordinating and leading services</li> <li>• lines of responsibility for management</li> <li>• communication between support services</li> <li>• strategic issues</li> </ul>	Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience  Ronnie Millar, Director, Student Counselling  Sheila Williams, Director, Student Disability Service  Ali Newell, Associate Chaplain, Chaplaincy  Shelagh Green, Director, Careers Service	Professor Allan Cumming

			<p>Euan Fergusson, Head of International Student Support, International Education Office</p> <p>Sarah Purves, Director of Membership, Support and Development, EUSA</p> <p>Charlotte Macdonald, Advice Place Deputy Manager, EUSA</p> <p>Lynne Duff, Assistant Director-Residence Life</p> <p>Antony Maciocia, Dean of Students, College of Science and Engineering</p> <p>Pete Higgins, Dean of Students, College of Humanities and Social Sciences</p> <p>Professor Alan Murray, Assistant Principal Academic Support</p>	
	<b>11.00 – 11.15</b>	<b>Morning Break</b>	<b>Review Team</b>	

<p><b>1.3</b></p>	<p>11.15 -12.15</p> <p>Venue: Elder Room</p>	<p><b>Governance – linkages with strategy</b></p> <p>To discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore further governance of mental health services and linkage with strategy</li> <li>• Explore the role of the Mental Health Strategy Group</li> </ul>	<p>Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience</p> <p>Helen Cameron, Convener of the Mental Health Strategy Group</p> <p>Ronnie Millar, Director, Student Counselling Service</p> <p>Sheila Williams, Director, Student Disability Service</p>	<p>Mark Ames</p>
<p><b>1.4</b></p>	<p>12.15 – 13.15</p> <p>Venue: Elder Room</p>	<p><b>Frameworks and infrastructure that underpin Mental Health Services Delivery</b></p> <p>Includes presentation on legal obligations prescribed by legislation for 10 minutes at beginning of meeting. Delivered by a Legal Advisor from Brodies.</p> <p>To discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal obligations of the University</li> <li>• How services and staff meet legal obligations regarding mental health services delivery</li> <li>• Aspirations for measuring outcomes</li> <li>• Infrastructure and location of services</li> </ul>	<p>Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience</p> <p>Jennifer Wallace, University Solicitor</p> <p>Ronnie Millar, Director, Student Counselling Service</p> <p>Sheila Williams, Director, Student Disability Service</p> <p>Antony Maciocia, Dean of Students, College of Science and Engineering</p>	<p>Dr Lisa Kendall</p>

			Pete Higgins, Dean of Students, College of Humanities and Social Sciences  Professor Alan Murray, Assistant Principal Academic Support	
	13.15 – 13.30	<b>Break before (late) lunch-time meeting</b>		
<b>1.5(a)</b>	13.30 – 14.45  Debrief in last 15 minutes  Venue: Elder and Lee Room	<b>Views of staff regarding Student Mental Health Services – UG and PGT</b>  To discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experience of supporting students with mental health difficulties and experience of interacting with relevant University services e.g. links and liaison with services</li> <li>• Staff Training/Guidance provided to staff engaging with students with mental health difficulties</li> <li>• Awareness of guidance materials etc</li> </ul>	Senior Tutors  Personal Tutors  Student Support Staff including teaching organisation managers Directors of Teaching  PG Directors of Graduate Schools	<i>Room will be split in half (figuratively)</i>  <u>Group 1</u> Lead: Dr Sheila Lodge Andy Peel Anne Marie O'Mullane  <u>Group 2</u> Professor Allan Cumming Mark Ames  <u>Group 3</u> Lead: Professor Judy Hardy Mark Wilkinson Jess Kileen  <i>Facilitation approach</i>
<b>1.5 (b)</b>	13.30 – 14.45 Debrief in last 15 minutes	<b>Views of staff regarding Student Mental Health Services – PGR</b>	PG Directors of Graduate Schools  Graduate School Managers	<u>PGR</u> Lead: Dr Lisa Kendall Sam Dale

	Venue: Carstares Room	To discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experience of supporting students with mental health difficulties and experience of interacting with relevant University services e.g. links and liaison with services</li> <li>• Staff Training/Guidance provided to staff engaging with students with mental health difficulties</li> <li>• Awareness of guidance materials etc</li> </ul>	Supervisors	<i>Facilitation approach</i>
<b>1.6</b>	14.45 – 15.45  Venue: Elder Room	<b>Consideration of mental health wellbeing activity undertaken by the University</b>  To discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the breadth of well-being services offered at the University</li> <li>• Leading managing coordinating wellbeing services at the University</li> <li>• Promotion of mental health wellbeing activity</li> <li>• Consider early intervention processes</li> <li>• Links and liaison between areas and the provision of training</li> </ul>	<p><b>Wellbeing:</b> Helen Ryall – Healthy University, Centre for Sports and Exercise</p> <p><b>Wellbeing:</b> Ronnie Millar, Director, Student Counselling Service</p> <p><b>Wellbeing:</b> Lynne Duff Assistant Director-Residence Life</p> <p><b>Programme specific support:</b> Dr Geoff Pearson, Senior Tutor, R(D)SVS</p> <p><b>Funding advice</b> – Charlotte Macdonald, Advice Place Deputy Manager, EUSA</p>	Sam Dale
<b>1.7</b>	15.45 – 16.45  Venue: Raeburn Room	<b>Student Experience Meeting 1: Meeting with students who have self-selected to meet with the review team</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion in context of support for students across the student journey: Framework - pre-admission</li> </ul>	Four Students	Andy Peel

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- admission</li> <li>- entry and induction</li> <li>- accommodation</li> <li>- on course</li> <li>- transitions</li> <li>- exit/access to employment</li> </ul>		
<b>1.8</b>	16.45 – 17.15	<b>Review team meeting</b> To discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day One, outline initial comments, commendations and recommendations to discuss further on Day Two</li> </ul>		

## Day Two

Session	Time	Purpose	Attendees (title & role)	Meeting Chair
<b>2.1</b>	09.00 – 09.30	<b>Review Team meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm plan for Day 2</li> <li>• Highlight any points for discussion on Day 2</li> </ul>	Review Team	
<b>2.2</b>	09.30 – 10.00  Venue: Elder Room	<b>Meeting with Deputy Secretary Student Experience and Heads of Service</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To discuss/clarify any questions from discussions on day 2</li> <li>• To confirm arrangements for feedback meeting</li> </ul>	Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience  Ronnie Millar, Director, Student Counselling Service  Sheila Williams, Director, Student Disability Service  Ali Newell, Associate Chaplain, Chaplaincy	Professor Allan Cumming

			<p>Sarah Purves, Director of Membership Support and Development, EUSA</p> <p>Charlotte Macdonald, Deputy Advice Place Manager, EUSA</p>	
<b>2.3</b>	<p>10.00 – 11.00</p> <p>Venue: Elder Room</p>	<p><b>Student Experience Meeting 2: Meeting with members of Student Societies involved in mental health work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion in context of support for students across the student journey: Framework</li> <li>- pre-admission</li> <li>- admission</li> <li>- entry and induction</li> <li>- accommodation</li> <li>- on course</li> <li>- transitions</li> <li>- exit/access</li> </ul>	<p>Members of Student Societies: Madeleine Payne, Convener of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Society</p>	<p>Jess Kileen</p>
	<p>11.00 – 11.15</p>	<p><b>Morning Break</b></p>		
<b>2.4</b>	<p>11.15 – 12.15</p> <p>Venue: Elder Room</p>	<p><b>Training: Support for staff who support students</b></p> <p>Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training needs of staff who support different types of cohorts e.g. UG, PGT and PGR</li> <li>• How these needs should be addressed</li> <li>• The link between staff wellbeing and student wellbeing</li> </ul>	<p>Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience</p> <p>Ronnie Millar, Director, Student Counselling Service</p> <p>Janet Craig, Occupational Health Manager, Occupational Health Unit</p> <p>Professor Alan Murray, Assistant Principal, Academic Support</p>	<p>Mark Ames</p>

	12.15 – 12.30	<b>Preparation time/break</b>		
<b>2.5</b>	12.30 – 13.30  Venue: Elder Room	<b>Student Experience Meeting 3: meeting with ODL students</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion in context of support for students across the student journey: Framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o pre-admission</li> <li>o admission</li> <li>o entry and induction</li> <li>o accommodation</li> <li>o on course</li> <li>o transitions</li> <li>o exit/access</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Two Students	Dr Sheila Lodge
<b>2.6</b>	13.45 – 15.45  Venue: Elder Room	<b>Review Team Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To discuss and gather team’s comments on the review</li> <li>• To note/agree initial commendations and recommendations to be fed back to review area</li> <li>• To formulate feedback to be given to review area</li> </ul>	Review Team	Professor Allan Cumming
	15.45 – 16.00	<b>Break</b>	Review Team	
<b>2.7</b>	16.00 – 17.00  Venue: Elder Room	<b>Feedback to the Review Area</b>	Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience  Ronnie Millar, Director, Student Counselling Service  Sheila Williams, Director, Student Disability Service	Professor Allan Cumming

			<p>Ali Newell, Associate Chaplain, Chaplaincy</p> <p>Sarah Purves, Director of Membership Support and Development, EUSA</p> <p>Charlotte Macdonald, Advice Place Manager, EUSA</p> <p>Lynne Duff Assistant Director-Residence Life</p> <p>Helen Ryall – Healthy University, Centre for Sports and Exercise</p>	
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The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

Electronic Meeting  
28 June – 8 July 2016

**Internal Review Responses:  
Feedback to Schools**

**Executive Summary**

The paper proposes the Committee's response to the year-on responses from Schools and Colleges to the recommendations in their Teaching and Postgraduate Programme Reviews.

**How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?**

Themes addressed in the reviews and in the paper align with the University's Strategic Plan goal of Excellence in Education and the Strategic Plan strategic theme of Outstanding Student Experience and Equality and Widening Participation.

**Action requested**

For Approval.

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

Following approval by the Committee, comments will be transmitted to the Schools/Colleges for use in taking forward further actions.

**Resource / Risk / Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

The paper does not request additional resource.

**2. Risk assessment**

Failure to maintain and enhance the quality of students' education and student experience would constitute an institutional risk.

**3. Equality and Diversity**

Equality Impact Assessment is not required. Internal review processes are subject to Equality Impact Assessment.

**4. Freedom of information**

Open.

**Key words**

TPR, PPR, Internal review

**Originator of the paper**

Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer  
June 2016

## **Internal Review Responses: Feedback to Schools**

### **TPR Biological Sciences - Year on response**

SQAC thanks Biological Sciences for its response.

The Subject Area is commended on the positive work in response to the TPR recommendations, especially connected with the longer-term work on the curriculum. The Undergraduate Teaching Review and the New Biology Curriculum Project seem to be very positive developments, and there is perhaps the potential here for other schools to learn from these achievements. The 'mini-sabbatical' initiative also sounds interesting and innovative, and it would be beneficial to share the results across the university.

Work to introducing Personal Development Plans (PDPs) for all students seems promising, perhaps especially that involving support for the transition to Honours study. Work on communication to students on graduate attributes, programme navigation and course choice and formative feedback also seems positive. There is perhaps scope to develop further initiatives in this area, especially beyond what currently appears as a focus on new students.

The Subject Area is commended on its positive engagement with the recommendation to improve and formalise Peer Observation of Teaching. However it is unclear that enhancements depend on the delivery of an online system; the framework for peer observation is relatively non-burdensome. It is unclear, too, why the HoS has indicated a commitment to encourage staff members to participate, rather than his expectation that they should.

In regard to the recommendation that the School reviews its teaching management structure and considers whether there is potential for simplification and clarification of roles. It is fully understandable that there is no perfect solution to management-related challenges, and the decision to undertake consultation within the college seems appropriate. Perhaps there are opportunities, however, to be more creative in tackling the recommendation; presumably there were some identifiable issues underlying the recommendation that deserve engagement, and there is a degree of negativity within the response.

Work by the senior tutor, in consultation with the Dean of Students and others in the college, on the role of personal tutor more generally might effectively complement work via P&DR meetings, which are likely to concentrate on an individual rather than system-wide issues.

In regard to the recommended that the School considers the most effective and efficient ways of assessing, remaining cognisant of turnaround times and staff workloads. One dimension of the recommendation involves approaches to assessment, whereas the (shorter-term) response focuses on marking and feedback. The connection between work on assessment and the New Biology Curriculum Project means that the timescale for completion will be extended, and perhaps it would be beneficial to expedite this work.

The redevelopment of KB is of course a significant, longer-term solution to the challenges of developing a centralised teaching hub and providing facilities for high-quality, small group teaching. However perhaps it would be helpful, in such cases, to identify shorter-term

remedies within a shorter-term timescale, rather than straightforwardly employing a '5 years +' timescale for completion.

Within the University Quality Framework (UQF) there is considerable scope for schools to decide how best to carry out QA according to local needs, and the response's focus on the UQF review does not seem to engage fully with the spirit of the recommendation that Biological Sciences continues to consider how best to embed enhancement and best practice arising from quality assurance-related activity.

### **TPR of Music - Year on response**

SQAC thanks Music for its response.

The Subject Area is commended on progress in regard to recruitment to the BMus Tech programme. The updated website is live and looks attractive, and the programme director seems to be leading new initiatives with energy. The Subject Area is also commended on moves to develop relationships within and outwith ECA, particularly in relation to the exciting new courses in place for 2016/17. The Subject Area is encouraged to continue to explore further collaborations and developments within and outwith ECA. The improvements to staff communications and the move to more inclusive staff meetings is commended.

The School is commended on making improvements to existing rehearsal and teaching space. However, the recommendation that the School initiates discussions on urgent action to address Music's accommodation issues remains largely unaddressed. Estates issues are notoriously difficult and can take many years to tackle however it is unclear whether there is a plan of action in response to the options appraisals that have taken place. The School is asked to clarify who is taking responsibility for leading this vital issue and the anticipated timescales.

It is noted that the workload allocation model is still under development six months on from the expected completion date. The School is encouraged to consider working with a School which already has a fully-fledged, workload allocation model in order to hasten the development of its own.

Some progress has clearly been made in developing new procedures for meetings between course organisers and tutors. However no timeline is given for the development of tutor training, which would be key to improving the student experience and developing close and enduring relationships with external tutors. A more transparent recruitment strategy is needed as is greater clarity in regard to the role of the PG tutors.

It is noted that an employability action plan has yet to be delivered. Employability is often seen as a difficult area for subjects such as Music, but there are lots of examples of music schools developing innovative and exciting approaches to supporting their students in this regard. The Subject Area is encouraged to ensure that the person with responsibility for developing their employability strategy is asked to engage widely with the sector in developing best practice.

The Subject Area is asked to confirm that the Director of UG Studies informed the first SSLC meeting of 2015-16 of the outcome of the TPR.

### **PPR of Divinity - 14 week response**

SQAC thanks Divinity for its response.

The response to nearly every recommendation is discussion at a college forum. The two recommendations with short time-line for completion (5 and 9) have been actioned. Given that this is the 14-week report, this response is entirely appropriate. We look forward to further progress at the 12-month report.

### **TPR of Archaeology 2014/15 - year on response**

SQAC thanks Archaeology for its response.

The Subject Area is commended on the review of courses offered and in particular the very positive introduction of a new, rarely available offering (Archaeology of Building). The Subject Area is encouraged to ensure stability of offering and provide briefing for students in degree pathway at the earliest opportunity so that expectations at pre-entry to University are managed.

The Subject Area is commended on its very positive response to incorporating innovative assessment into the new Archaeology of Architecture course. This may lead to similar uptake in other courses across the Subject Area/School and dissemination of innovative practice. The additional IAD-organised PG tutor training is to be welcomed and a positive move, as is the use of EVASYS to improve the rate of return of feedback sheets. The Subject Area is encouraged to monitor trends and aim for increasing returns.

### **TPR of Oral Health Sciences 2014/15 – year-on response**

SQAC thanks Oral Health Sciences for its response.

The Subject Area is commended on meeting or being on target to meet all deadlines and also on identifying simple and workable solutions to most issues.

The Team Meetings and Personal Tutor meetings have now removed from the quality assurance system with a view to simplifying processes, however the Subject Area must continue to ensure appropriate oversight of the Personal Tutor system. The potential afforded by gaps in clinical time created by patient non-attendance could be utilized with a PALS initiative or a drop-in session with selected faculty. It is suggested that the Subject Area inform students on a regular basis about the option to take advice from The Advice Place, run by EUSA.

### **PPR of Online Distance Learning Programmes, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine 2014/15 – year-on response**

SQAC thanks the College for its response.

The College is commended on the revisions to its processes and procedures to support and develop staff. The year-on response describes what seems to be a very sound process of information provision, discussion and appropriate adjustment of business plans. The Graduate School College Hub is to be commended for its efforts in data collection and provision, which has clearly added a great deal of value to programme review meetings. Dissertation supervisors now have access to much clearer guidance on their role and responsibilities, and good support and engagement methods are in place. The College is also commended on the revival of the PGT Directors and Administrators Fora which are clearly playing important roles in enhancing communication, related to strategic developments and also related to sharing programme practice. Other parts of the University are also likely to be interested to hear more if the College does decide to create the new post of PG support officer to help with difficult cases.

The College is commended on the number of initiatives across all four programmes to engage with Y3 students and on the efforts to boost ODL student representation. Programme teams are commended on the skills training and development options that are in place for students. There seems to be robust scrutiny of feedback turn-around times for assessments on the programmes but it may be worth exploring further the statement that the Clinical Trials delays were caused by a shortage of markers, in case a staffing issue needs to be addressed. Programme teams might also find it worthwhile checking how draft materials related to distance learning students are being channelled within the College for review prior to publication by the University Induction Team, to ensure that they can input where needed.

The College seems to have made some progress on the agreed approach to personal tutoring on PGT ODL programmes. However, if there is a delay in implementation due to issues with the email/recording process then this should be addressed as soon as possible. The report also notes several other ongoing systems initiatives but it appears that there is still a need for more effective communication channels between programme teams and those responsible for the IT infrastructure that programmes rely on.

### **PPR of Health in Social Science 2014/15 – year-on response**

SQAC thanks the School for its response.

The School is commended on its good progress against most of the recommendations. In particular, the School is commended for its actions to develop student communities, including discussions with EUSA, its review of processes with a view to reducing administrative load (CPD courses), and for putting in place improved resilience in examinations and assessment work. Of particular note is the School's ongoing restructuring which will better support innovative interdisciplinary developments.

There is concern about the use of 'local spreadsheets' for handling marks and every attempt should be made to move away from this to a more robust system as soon as reasonably possible. There also appears to be some slippage in plans to relocate to Moray House to address space problems. The School is encouraged to urge the University to implement this as soon as possible.

It is noted that a response is still awaited from the CHSS college office in regard to the recommendation that the College count Professional Doctorate students as PGR (not PGT) in College target-setting and to investigate reasons for any funding penalties imposed by the Scottish Funding Council that would arise from transition of these programmes from PGT to PGR.

The School is encouraged to ensure that there are appropriate measures in place to ensure independence of the roles of quality assurance and enhancement and learning and teaching at School and subject area where they are carried out by the same person.

### **TPR of Informatics 2014/15 - year on response**

SQAC thanks Informatics for its response.

The School is commended for its positive update. Almost all recommendations have been implemented or are well on the way towards implementation. This reflects significant effort and positive engagement with the TPR process.

The School has made positive steps to engage the widest range of its academic staff in teaching and allied academic activities. The School is encouraged to build on this by seeking further collaboration opportunities with the Institute for Academic Development (similar to the development of the custom programme for the Chancellor's Fellows and new teaching staff).

Once the current round of annual appraisals has been completed it would be interesting to hear more about the impact of the new template and guidance on practice in relation to the inclusion of teaching performance in annual appraisal.